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Good Old Boat

Inspiring hands-on sailors

Issue 151: July/August 2023

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Good Old Boat

Issue 151: August/July 2023

25th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

DEPARTMENTS

ON THE COVER

Devin J., a sailor based in Victoria, British Columbia, spent a week with friends in October 2020 sailing his sloop-rigged 1968 Alberg 37 Mark 1, *Whiskey Soul*, around Desolation Sound. On his 35th birthday, the captain and crew enjoyed the best winds of the trip as they broad-reached down Malaspina Strait on their way back. Just before this photo was taken, a humpback whale breached off the starboard bow, and then a rainbow appeared on the horizon over Gibsons, the destination for the final evening of their cruise. For more information on *Whiskey Soul*'s refit and journey, follow along on Instagram @whiskeysoul_sailing.

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The sailing magazine for the rest of us.

Contributing Boats

A few boats behind the stories in this issue.

Mystic, 1976 C&C 30 MkI

"*Mystic* has been taking care of us for 31 years. She has circumnavigated Lake Superior twice, cruised Lake Huron's North Channel for two seasons, and voyaged to Lake Superior's Isle Royale and the Slate Islands many times. The idea to launch *Good Old Boat* magazine was born in the Slate Islands."

Designer: C&C Design
Owners: Karen Larson and Jerry Powlas
Home Port: Superior, Wisconsin
Fun Fact: *Mystic* has worn out two engines and is well into her third. She's been hit by lightning once with Karen and Jerry aboard, and has had the same two-person plastic kayak as a dinghy the whole time.
25 Years of Good Old Boat on page 16.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRITZ SEEGERS

Eurisko, 1978 Creekmore 34

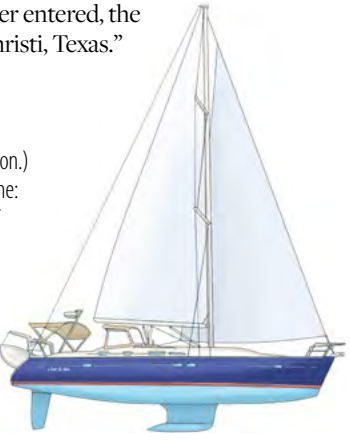
"She's built like a tank, romps upwind like a sailing machine, and we've been told she's usually the prettiest girl at the dance."

Designer: Lee Creekmore/Andrew Hebson
Owners: Dave and Connie McBride
Home Port: On paper, Kent Island, Maryland. We don't put anything on the transom anymore, because it's been decades since she's been there. It just happens to be where we lived on land last.
Fun Fact: She was built, from laying the keel to all the beautiful interior woodwork, by the first owner, Andrew Hebson, who also climbed Mount Everest before he died. He didn't do anything halfway.
A Current Affair on page 52.

c'est le bon, 2006 Beneteau 423

"*c'est le bon* is special to us because she's ours. Also, she sails well and is quite fast — we won our division in the only race we ever entered, the 2012 Harvest Moon Race from Galveston to Corpus Christi, Texas."

Designer: Jean-Marie Finot (Groupe Finot)
Owners: Hal and Terri Wells
Home Port: Houston, Texas (Although we keep her in Anacortes, Washington.)
Fun Fact: The name *c'est le bon* comes from a Supertramp song of that name: the chorus goes, "c'est le bon, sailing on and on . . ." Late on the evening of the night before we had to turn in registration papers for the boat after we purchased it, used, in late 2011, we were struggling to come up with a unique name with a French flair, when this song came up on the stereo, and it was like, "That's it," which is more or less what c'est le bon means. Literal translation, as confirmed by our native French-speaking friend, is: "That's the one," or "that's the best," depending upon context.
False Alarm on page 42.



View From Here

BY ANDY CROSS

This issue of *Good Old Boat*, #151, marks 25 years since the magazine was first published in the summer of 1998. Great Lakes sailors Karen Larson and Jerry Powlas, who met through sailing, founded the magazine and have been exploring Lake Superior aboard their 1976 C&C 30, *Mystic*, for over 30 years.

Like other sailors they knew, Karen and Jerry maintained and upgraded *Mystic* by themselves, which became the catalyst for launching a sailing magazine that reflected a self-sufficient, do-it-yourself approach. They created *Good Old Boat* to share their passion for sailboats — inspiring readers to restore, refit, upgrade, and sail boats that can live on as long as they're maintained and cherished. From the beginning, that has been the spirit of *Good Old Boat*.

As one would expect, the magazine started as a low-tech operation. Though it had an email address, widespread internet adoption was still in its infancy, and nearly everything at *Good Old Boat* was conducted by mail. Karen and Jerry didn't accept credit cards, instead opting to take checks. Stories were sent in by post and had to be typed or retyped for layout in the magazine. Photos were sent in and viewed through a slide projector on the wall. Aside from the cover and a few interior pages, the majority of *Good Old Boat* was printed in black and white.

Of course, over the years, *Good Old Boat's* processes have adjusted with the times. Now we write and receive lots of emails, accept credit cards, process stories and images by computer with advanced software, print the full magazine in color, and have a digital issue, website, and e-newsletter. Yet with all of that, one thing has remained unchanged. We've always maintained everything in-house. *Good Old Boat* is an independently owned small business run by a female entrepreneur, and we don't rely on a third-party business to handle our customer service. Heck, in true do-it-yourself fashion, we still answer the phone when someone wants to subscribe, renew, order a back issue, or change an address. Bottom line, like our boats, we take care of our readers.

From the helm of *Good Old Boat*, I look back on the magazine's legacy with appreciation for that ethos, and a weather eye toward the future. Twenty-five years ago, during the summer of 1998, I was a 15-year-old doing typical teenager things. I was also sailing. I raced and daysailed our family's Sunfish and

Good Old Boat **Editor Andy Cross heads out for a daysail on the family Sunfish during the summer of 1998.**

Returning home from a day of racing aboard an O'Day Ospray on Bass Lake, Michigan in 1998.

O'Day Ospray, and got out on our Hunter 23 whenever possible.

Back in those days, like *Good Old Boat*, sailing for me was a decidedly low-tech affair. No wind instruments. No depth sounder. No GPS (though I did know what Loran was). My only digital anything was a Timex wristwatch for timing starts, which I may or may not have remembered to wear. Simple enough, I was passionate about sailing and was starting to tinker with the boats I sailed.

Now, as a newly minted 40-year-old, I sit at the nav desk of my home and family cruising boat, a 1984 Grand Soleil 39 *Yahtzee,* working on this issue of the magazine. When we chart a course for each issue, I'm continually motivated by the detailed, creative, and adventurous stories that come from our talented pool of writers, contributors, and editors. A thorough approach to conveying how projects are completed or how sailing adventures unfolded is at the core of *Good Old Boat*. Helping readers make their boats safer, more comfortable, and better suited to the needs of the crew and the places they sail is paramount. I think about these things with my own sailboat and family, and I believe that translates to the boats that our readers own and dote on as well.

Similarly to how *Good Old Boat's* processes have adapted to the passing of time, in many ways, so too has our content. Since 1998, the average boat size has grown and so has the amount of products and gear available to outfit them. Sailors with all ages, types, and lengths of boats are modernizing their systems to be more efficient and environmentally friendly, including propulsion, electrical, navigation, refrigeration, running and standing rigging, sails, and more.

Year after year, those same sailors are gearing up for voyages in their local waters. Some are getting ready for daysails and weekend outings, others are shoving off for months or years at a time to destinations far from their home ports. As with many things in life, preparing our boats is all about balance. We like creature comforts aboard, but we don't want to make things overly complicated, either. So it goes with *Good Old Boat*.

Little did Karen and Jerry know that decades later the magazine's original cover tagline, "Still sailing after all these years!" and the one we use today, "Inspiring hands-on sailors," would reflect this balance. We're here to help you keep your boats sailing, and to inspire you to continually make them whatever version of "better" you aspire to — then head out on the water to enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Good Old Boat has always been about sharing a passion for sailing and boats with others, and I'm proud that it remains that way to this day.

Golden Globe Race Winner, A Sailor at Heart, and A Brew at Sunrise

A Historic Victory

The crew of *Good Old Boat* would like to extend a hearty and heartfelt congratulations to Kirsten Neuschäfer for her victory in the 2022–2023 Golden Globe Race. Kirsten crossed the finish line aboard her Cape George 36, *Minnehaha*, off Les Sables-d'Olonne, France, on Thursday, April 27, with an official time of 233 days, 18 hours, 43 minutes, and 47 seconds. Accomplishing this heroic feat, she becomes the first woman to win a round-the-world race via the three great capes — an amazing and historic victory!

The Golden Globe Race is based on the original *Sunday Times* event that was run in 1968–1969 and won by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston. The race is intentionally simple: Depart from Les Sables-d'Olonne on Sept. 4, 2022, and sail solo, nonstop around the world, via the three great capes, before returning to Les Sables-d'Olonne. Entrants are limited to sailing yachts and equipment similar to what was available to Sir Robin in that first race — that is, without modern technology or the benefit of satellite-based navigation aids. Competitors must sail in production boats between 32 feet and 36 feet overall (9.75–10.97m) designed prior to 1988 that have a full-length keel with rudder attached to their trailing edge. For more information visit: GoldenGlobeRace.com.

Above, **Kirsten Neuschäfer is all smiles after winning the historic Golden Globe Race.**

On right, **Neuschäfer's Cape George 36, *Minnehaha*, was built in Port Townsend, Washington.**

Power Play?

I have been sailing since I was 10 years old and have progressed in boats from Sailfish, Cape Cod Knockabout, International Jollyboat, Rainbow, Sabre 28, Sabre 30, Laser, Force 5, and finally, a Sabre 38. I spent time on the Tufts University sailing team and have competed in many kinds of boats all over the New England coast, collecting my share of silverware. Your magazine profiled us in the May/June 2002 issue with our Sabre 30. Two summers ago, we spent three weeks on our Sabre 38 and actually sailed for a total of 1 ½ hours due to all the rain, high winds (or no wind), and fog. Last winter we made the decision to go to the "dark side," sell our beloved sailboat, and buy a powerboat. After a

great deal of searching, we found a Jarvis Newman 36, which was designed by Raymond Bunker, the hull built by Jarvis Newman, and then finished by Joel White at Brooklin Boatyard in Center Harbor, Maine. To say that this was an interesting transition would be an understatement. We now love this classic good old boat and have many folks approach us in admiration of her good looks.

As a longtime subscriber, I would respectfully recommend that part of your terrific magazine be dedicated to some of us who have made the transition to power. There are a lot of good old powerboats out there and we experience some of the same issues as our fellow sailboaters. You could profile designers, builders, boatyards, and onboard projects. I believe that the number and variety of interesting articles would be limitless.

I wish you continued success with your magazine, one of the few boating magazines that gets read from cover to cover.

— David Taft
Harpswell, Maine

Good Old Boat **contributor Ashley Gremel took this photo of a buoy marking the Hawk Channel on the east side of Rodriguez Key in Florida. She and her husband were traveling north along the coast toward Chesapeake Bay.**

Old School Nav

Thanks, Andy, for the quick response and link to getting a new hand-bearing compass. I'm heading up to the North Channel again this coming August, and I think my 30-year-old hand-bearing compass is ready to retire. By the way, my wife and I sailed our 1967 Pearson Vanguard, *Elizabeth*, from Charlevoix, Michigan, to the Atlantic and down the Eastern Seaboard to Annapolis using only charts (no radar, no GPS, no LORAN). Along the way, we found that *Elizabeth* is everything that fans of good old Pearsons have to say about quality and seaworthiness, while getting admiring thumbs-up signals from folks on docks, piers, and bridges.

We greatly appreciate *Good Old Boat*, and if we can share some information or make a few sailors smile, count us as "aye-aye."

— Dale Herder
Charlevoix, Michigan

Sailor at Heart

Hello from Port Townsend, Washington, home of the Wooden Boat Festival and the Race to Alaska. I'm also from Hazen, North Dakota, 12 miles south of Lake Sakakawea (200 miles of deep open water), which you featured in a recent Mail Buoy. I'm often asked if I go to Arizona during our sometimes brutal and gorgeous winters in North Dakota. My reply, "Nope, Arizona isn't for me." I'm a sailor at heart. I keep a Cape Dory 25D on Lake Sakakawea for late spring, summer, and early fall sailing, and a Cal 25 in Port Townsend for the rest of the sailing season. For a sum of $119, I can hop a train in Minot, North Dakota, arrive at Edmonds, Washington, walk to the ferry dock, hop aboard, arrive in Kingston, and then drive to Port Townsend to be sailing at 2 p.m. It is a 26-hour trip. However, I learned that one needs to wear about the same amount of winter clothes for 20 below zero in North Dakota to sail on the Salish Sea in January in Port Townsend. Thanks, *Good Old Boat*, for providing the sailing spirit year-round.

— Charles Stroup
Hazen, North Dakota

That Sinking Feeling Part II

I read "That Sinking Feeling" by Drew Frye in the Mail Buoy section of your last issue (May/June 2023). As Drew related, the boat was almost launched with a 1-inch hole in the hull as a result of an unfinished project he was working on (a new through-hull). The launch nearly occurred due to a communication failure at the boatyard, but the launch was stopped just short of disaster. Lucky for Drew and his good old boat!

continued on page 56

Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 379

A modern racer-cruiser with two helms

BY ALLEN PENTICOFF

This 2013 Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 379 was less than 10 years old at the time of my review, providing a great opportunity to look at some of its modern design features that might be worth incorporating into any older boat refit.

The boat's owners are Thor and Cheryl Schaette of south central Illinois. Until recently, they had been mooring *Schatz Sea* (German for "treasure") at Boulder Marina on Carlyle Lake. They recently retired and sold their speedy Farrier F-33 trimaran that was featured in a *Good Old Boat* review in the January/February 2020 issue; with the Jeanneau now ready to be their new liveaboard home, they hope to moor on the west coast of Florida or in North Carolina. My inspection and sailing was done in light air on Carlyle Lake in late 2022.

History

In 1957, hardware store owner Henri Jeanneau began his boatbuilding career with an outboard-powered wood dinghy. In the 1960s he began building with fiberglass. Jeanneau's first sailboat, the Alize 20, came along in 1963 and was designed by E.G. van de Stadt. Through the early 1970s, most Jeanneaus were trailerable fiberglass sailboats, with larger boats appearing in the mid-1970s. A line of cruising boats was introduced with the Daniel Andrieu-designed Sun Odyssey 42 in 1986. Altogether there have been approximately 173 Jeanneau sailboat models in cruiser-racer, cruiser, and catamaran configurations, plus some one-off products, ranging from 16 to 65 feet. After three ownership changes, in 1995 Jeanneau was acquired by Groupe Beneteau, which is based in Saint-Gilles-Croix-de-Vie, France. Production of the Marc Lombard-designed Sun Odyssey 379 began in 2011.

Design

Jeanneau has used a wide variety of naval architects to design its boats, but they mostly have followed a familiar modern appearance of near-plumb bows, short overhangs, and low, sleek cabin trunks, and they typically carry their wide beam well aft. Owing to Beneteau's ownership, there are similarities in design and construction between brands, and nowhere is this more evident than in the incorporation of hard chines in certain models. The claim that this feature significantly contributes to form stability is debatable, but it does increase panel stiffness somewhat and also interior volume at an important location. Plus, it is a distinctive design signature.

The displacement/LWL ratio of 166 means the 379 has a fairly flat bottom that will achieve good speeds. As a rough idea of its comparative speed, the few registered in Performance Handicap Racing Fleets (PHRF) fleets in the U.S. rate between 105 and 111 seconds per mile, compared with an older J/37 at 72 and an Island Packet 37 at 186.

The 379 was offered in two cabin layouts and three different drafts. The three-cabin arrangement has two staterooms aft and a narrower head, while the review boat version has a single double berth, a large storage area in lieu of the port stateroom, and a larger head well aft. Of the three keel options, which include a swing keel, *Schatz Sea* has the fixed shoal-draft keel, which is the model in nearly all the magazine reviews. The swing keel is also described as a lifting keel, but it can't be both so we're not sure what to make of it. And to further confuse, the deep draft model apparently has a single rudder and helm.

Next page, **flat sheer, plumb bow, and hard chines define the current French styling of midsize sailing yachts. Note the absence of a roach in the furling mainsail.**

Construction

Jeanneau and Beneteau are leaders in developing efficient, modern facilities that enable streamlining the production processes. The 379's fiberglass hull is single skin, meaning there is no core. Jeanneau employs what it calls the "Prisma" process, whereby decks are injection-molded with gelcoat on both sides

Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 379

Builder	Jeanneau
Designer	Marc Lombard
LOA	37'2"
LWL	34'2"
Beam	12'4"
Draft (full)	6'5"
Draft (shoal)	4'11"
Draft (keel/cb)	3'7"–7'4"
Displacement	14,771 lbs
Ballast	3,900 lbs
Sail Area	628 sq ft
Sail Area/Displ	16.74
Ballast/Displ	26.40%
Displ/LWL Ratio	166
Comfort Ratio	22.93
Capsize Screening No	2.02
Water	53 gals
Fuel	34 gals

One of many clever features on the 379 is the drop-down stern platform with built-in telescoping swim ladder. Below the platform is a plug with a pull-out emergency rope ladder, allowing a person to exit the water even if the platform is retracted.

and end-grain balsa as a core. Hulls are handlaid fiberglass; the larger models over 50 feet are resin-infused, which is a more advanced process that eliminates volatile organic compounds in the workplace and better controls the resin/glass ratio. Interior pans and overheads eliminate a lot of wood parts and reduce labor. The synthetic toerail is difficult to distinguish from teak.

Rig

The rig is a fractional double-spreader rig with roller-furling headsail; *Schatz Sea* has an in-mast furling mainsail. While mainsail furling inhibits performance, it certainly aids in reducing the effort to sail. The shrouds are mounted well inboard, making passage by the rigging easy. The jib sheets are readily at hand to the helmsperson, with self-tailing winches. The sheet leads are on line-controlled jib block cars that reach the two helms as well. A simple boom brake is adjustable from either side, as is the main sheet.

Deck

Forward there is a large anchor locker, windlass, and short bow roller for all your ground tackle needs. Aft, the cabin top handholds are sleek and built in like those in the saloon. However, the cabin trunk is so low that the handholds are essentially

The centerline cockpit pedestal is insulated and serves as a cooler as well as storage space. That's also where the multidisplay instrument is mounted.

useless for going forward in a seaway. I found that the large-diameter mast shrouds made the best handholds. While moving fenders from one side of the boat to the other, going forward around the mast was the easiest path. Though on *Schatz Sea* all lines are led aft and sail furling requires no work outside the cockpit, a boat with a conventional mainsail would benefit from a mast pulpit.

The transom has a platform and a ladder that easily lowers and raises via a cleated line. When docked stern-to, it is super easy to get aboard as the twin wheels are out of the way and the center pedestal offers good handholds. The transom also features a small step-lip and an emergency overboard ladder.

Jeanneau has mounted hard-point tiedowns along the sidedecks for tether attachments and in the lazarette for dinghy tiedown. The lazarette also holds large fenders or a deflated dinghy. The two-bottle propane locker is readily at hand for easy tank exchange, one of many well-thought-out details that also include a life raft well.

The bow area is configured for two anchor rollers, stowage, and a windlass concealed by the hatch cover — all very clean.

The Sailing Patio

With a wide beam aft, the cockpit is catamaran patio-wide. This is mostly a plus due to the clever stainless steel and white plastic fixed steering pedestals port and starboard. Underway, the footrest tube at the bottom is great for bracing while heeled. However, if you are seated forward of the pedestal, bracing is iffy. Grabrails at the top of the pedestal make getting up from the seats easy and secure. Additional grab bars are forward of each wheel. The pedestal tables swing up and easily lock in place with supports. To lower them, you just press a release button. Another sealed storage area at the forward end of the pedestal is a good spot for binoculars and such.

The square sail-sized bimini top on *Schatz Sea* is mounted quite high. I was able to stand on a seat to take photos! Due to its width, shade is usually available somewhere in the cockpit. Thor wanted flexible solar panels on top of the bimini but loathed the thought of mounting holes or sewn patches, so he cleverly employed round matching magnets over and under the canvas to hold them in place.

The companionway makes for a secure spot to stand and work the two self-tailing winches that flank it and operate the many lines that lead aft to them, then into two large net bags to contain the tails. A powered winch handle or powered winch would be nice for use with the mainsail's in-mast furler that otherwise needs a lot of winch grinding in and out. The companionway dropboard is dark translucent acrylic with slanted vent holes that prevent rain from entering, but not bugs.

Beneteau, which owns the Jeanneau brand, is a master at streamlined, efficient production, with CNC-cut veneered wood panels and composite modules usually well hidden by clever engineering.

The icebox is set in the counter between the sink and stove. Wire racks help organize contents.

Access to the bottom of the icebox is solved by a well-insulated door.

Belowdecks

Two interior arrangements were offered, one with a V-berth and mirror-image double cabins aft, and a second, as on *Schatz Sea*, with a single double berth and a larger head. The shower is separate from the vanity within this space, but not separate from the head itself.

The saloon is neat and modern, with light-colored veneers. The forward cabin is sufficiently roomy and private. Great light and ventilation prevail. The overhead has flush-mounted handholds that are quite good, as are the handholds below the windows.

All storage is hidden behind doors with button latch pulls. The overhead LED saloon lights have three-way switches — a great feature. Other small lights operate with tiny toggle switches that you would need to get accustomed to. All exposed bolts and screws are covered with caps.

I absolutely love the overhead hatches with their built-in shades and bug screens that retract completely out of the way or may be used in combinations. There is a shade in the side window for the quarter berth that retracts as well. Opening portlights are provided for this berth and for the "garage" via cockpit locations. The quarter berth also has an overhead hatch for good ventilation and light.

My wife and I were overnight guests on *Schatz Sea*. We slept in the roomy forward cabin where the built-in air conditioning was too cold, so I blocked the vent. I like boats with an aft head, and the 379's head was quite easily used underway and is roomy and airy. The wet locker is just forward of the head, where it drains into the bilge.

While the port cockpit seat locker offers a large storage space, it does not open to the interior. Under it, accessed through the head, is the garage, an aptly named space. A large door permits easy access to what in other boats would normally be a full sleeping cabin. Sliding removable drawers in a rack offer good storage for small items. Access to batteries, engine, systems, and anything big is found here, although you may need to dig a bit after you fill it with stuff. This garage is a sailor's delight.

Underway

The twin rudders are protected by the shoal-draft bulb-wing keel. On Jeanneau's 379 web page there are photos of the shoal-draft version sitting upright and dried out on a flat beach, balanced on the wing and twin rudders. Under power in reverse, there is little prop walk and plenty of rudder power. The previous owner added a bow thruster, but Thor has found it is not necessary. He hasn't removed it, but

would rather have better sailing performance without the "big brick and hole in the bow."

The three-cylinder, 29-hp Yanmar diesel engine coupled to a saildrive was very smooth and quiet. Its single-lever control was set up for the starboard wheel.

Thor reports that once the 379 heels over onto its hard chine, it will stabilize there and have a neutral helm. He says it pays to fall off a bit from hard on the wind and to crack the sheets a bit to get this nicely balanced spot. But if heel increases past the chine, the 379 will behave like any other boat and need more attention to the helm and reduced sail.

The leather-wrapped wheels had a light to moderate feel — it wasn't quite fingertip control, but a light hand was all that was needed. Some of this may be due to the friction in the system of two wheels and two rudders. I found it comfortable to steer standing or sitting to the side; however, I would miss the relaxed seating of a leeward cockpit seat to nestle down into to steer one-handed while keeping an eye on the jib. Visibility forward is great from either wheel. *Schatz Sea* has a wind indicator gauge and compass at each wheel, but the nav and depth electronics are on the table pedestal control head. While this touch screen can be turned, I found myself going over to have a look fairly frequently.

Conclusion

"Different strokes for different folks" is a good saying. Some may scoff at the 379's huge cockpit, wide aft beam, and accoutrements as not being sailorly. But the manufacturers of modern yachts know who their customers are, and the Sun Odyssey 379 was designed for those who want spacious accommodations above and below deck for entertaining.

Thor and Cheryl are not strangers to sailing for sailing's sake, but when it came time to retire, Thor carefully listed all the boxes he needed checked to live on a boat, and the Sun Odyssey 379 came out on top. They had the good fortune to find a newer, barely used boat in their price range to fulfill their liveaboard dream.

Also, there is a wide range of Jeanneau Sun Odyssey lengths that can be found with similar features and different prices. The 379s sold new for under $200,000, and few used ones are currently available in the U.S. I found several for sale overseas for around $150,000 USD.

Some of the innovative features found on the 379 might inspire you to "modernize" your good old boat.

Allen Penticoff, a Good Old Boat *contributing editor, is a freelance writer, sailor, and longtime aviator. He has trailer-sailed on every Great Lake and on many inland waters and has had keelboat adventures on fresh and salt water. He owns an American 14.5, a MacGregor 26D, and a 1955 Beister 42-foot steel cutter that he stores as a someday project.*

Top to bottom on right, **the compact nav station is minimal for a cruising yacht; one sits at the end of the port settee. Regarding hidden fiberglass modules, note the barely visible section of the floor grid.**

A closer look inside the quarter cabin with its one portlight opening into the cockpit footwell. There is floor space to sit and close the door.

The front of the Yanmar diesel auxiliary is easily accessed through a gas-spring supported door.

Understanding the Ratios in Specs

What the numbers can tell you about boat performance, comfort, and stability.

BY DAN SPURR

Yacht designers make many calculations in their work that help define the final shape and performance of the boat. Here we'll explain the D/L and SA/D ratios and two numbers that we typically list in our used boat review specifications.

Displacement/Length Ratio

In very general terms, we know that the term heavy displacement means slow, and light displacement means fast. More precisely, the calculated displacement/length (D/L) ratio tells much more about the shape of the boat. Among other features, a heavy displacement hull form has slack bilges (a gentle turn where the hull meets the keel) and the light displacement boat has firm bilges (a sharp turn where the hull bottom meets the keel).

The displacement-length ratio (D/L) is a nondimensional computation that allows one to compare the relative heaviness of one boat to another, taking into account load waterline length (LWL) in feet. It is calculated by dividing a boat's displacement in long tons (2,240 pounds) by .01 LWL cubed, or $Dt/(.01\ LWL)^3$.

Ultralight: under 100. Light: 100-200. Moderate: 200-300. Heavy: 300-400.

Sail Area/Displacement Ratio

The SA/D lets one compare the relative sail power of different boats. Here's the formula: SA/D.667. SA is in square feet and D is in cubic feet to the 2/3 power. Displacement in pounds is divided by 64 to determine cubic feet.

Motorsailers generally have a number of or below 15. Coastal cruisers typically rate 16-17. Racers are higher, of course.

Comfort Ratio

In his book *Understanding Boat Design* (highly recommended reading for everyone), yacht designer and former *Good Old Boat* contributor Ted Brewer wrote that he "dreamed up" the comfort ratio "tongue in cheek," only to find it "accepted by many as a measure of the motion comfort of a boat ... it is based on the fact that the quickness of motion or corkiness of a hull in a choppy sea is what causes discomfort and seasickness."

Here's the formula: displacement ÷ 65 x (.7 LWL + .3 LOA) x beam 1.33, where displacement is expressed in pounds, and load waterline length and length overall are expressed in feet. Brewer said that heavy oceangoing cruisers rate more favorably in the 50-60 range, while lightweight boats may rate as low as 10 or less. Average cruisers rate in the mid-30s.

Capsize Screening Formula

The most accurate determination of a given boat's stability is obtained by having it measured for one of the common rating rules. For example, the Offshore Racing Congress (ORC) employs the International Measurement System (IMS) that uses a computer-based program to determine, among other things, a stability index. Many expert sailors recommend a stability index number of 120 or higher for safe offshore sailing.

But because this program is not available to the average sailor who doesn't care about racing yet still wants to know how safe their boat is offshore — that is, its ability to resist capsize and remain in an inverted position — the capsize screen formula was invented. It's fairly simple.

Take the cube root of displacement volume (divide displacement in pounds by 64) and divide it into maximum beam (Bmax) in feet. For example, take a boat that displaces 15,000 pounds and has a beam of 11 feet. 15,000/64 = 234. The cube root of 234 is 6.16. Divide 11 by 6.16 and the result is 1.78.

Boats that rate 2.0 or less are considered more safe offshore than boats that rate more than 2.0. This simple formula has been often criticized as an oversimplification of the factors that determine stability and safety.

100: Strictly racing, thrill sailing and overnighting
200: Racing, weekending and light cruising
250: All-around good sailing, motoring, long and short cruising with moderate liveability
300: Fair sailing for long cruises but excellent motoring with good liveability
400: Poor sailing but excellent motoring, seakindliness and liveability
500: Terrible sailing but superb liveability. Motoring is good with high power.

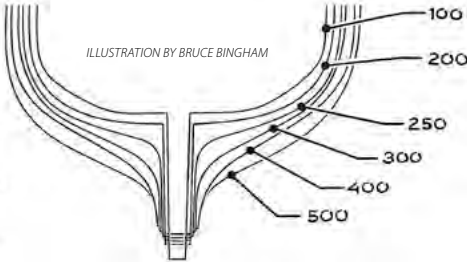


ILLUSTRATION BY BRUCE BINGHAM

Dan Spurr is Good Old Boat*'s boat review editor. He's also the author of several books on boat ownership, among them* Heart of Glass, *a history of fiberglass boatbuilding, and the memoir* Steered by the Falling Stars.

Sealant Removal Without Tears

The right products and technique are key to separating those stubbornly cemented parts.

BY DREW FRYE

I've tried solvents for removing sealants, but unless they are aggressive enough to melt gelcoat, they have little effect on polyurethane or silicone. There is always the pry-and-scrape method, but the first can remove chunks of gelcoat and the latter is sure to scratch.

Polyurethane sealants adhere tenaciously, with 3M 5200 leading the pack. Referred to by some as the devil's glue, 3M 5200 is better classified as a permanent adhesive than as a sealant, and it does not like to let go. It is too stiff to make a good sealant and involves too much of a fight to remove, so it's better to think of it as a flexible epoxy and only use it when the items don't move and won't be coming apart in the next 20 years. Other polyurethanes, including 3M 4200 and Sikaflex-291, are more flexible and less tenacious, but if there is a large bond area, you still won't pry large surfaces apart without collateral damage. You need to weaken their grip.

Silicone is not that strong, so separating the joined parts is usually not horrible. But it's nearly impossible to remove all the residue. You scrub, and use solvents, and scrub some more, but the silicone remains in the pores and the surface still feels slippery. Nothing will bond to it, not even more silicone. You need to weaken the bond so you can get it out of the pores.

Getting the Remover in There

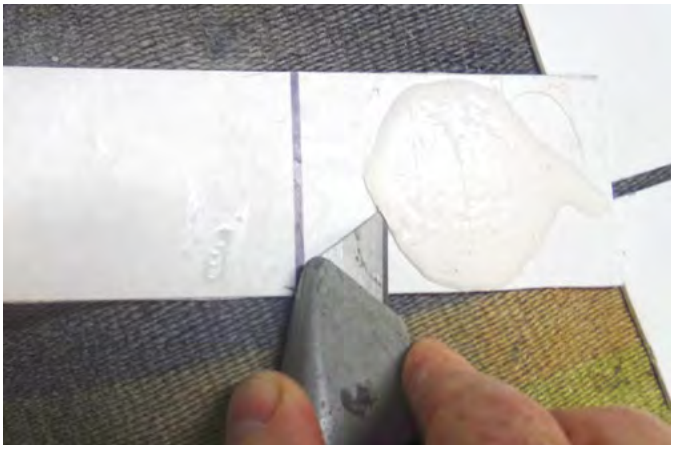
No matter which solvent or remover you choose, it won't work unless you get it into the bond area. This means taking a razor knife or wire and slitting right along one of the edges, in the bond area. Soak the slit, work the solvent in with another pass of the knife or wire, and then wait 10 to 15 minutes. The chemistry takes some time. Then slit deeper, rewet, and repeat. Patience is required.

Under the Wire

Leader wire from the local bait and tackle store works better than stainless or monel rigging wire. Create a handle on each end by twisting tightly around a large dowel or screwdriver shaft. In combination with a moderately aggressive solvent, like xylene, or one of the removers mentioned below, work the wire back and forth between the deck and the hardware like a saw. Work slowly, giving the solvent a chance to work. Pause, rewet, and repeat.

Testing

I had some old hatches that were due for new lenses, so I tried a variety of solvents and removers to see what worked on the factory Dow 795 silicone. Acetone, methyl ethyl ketone (MEK), xylene, naphtha, ethylene glycol



Above on right, **Drew slides a blade along the bond line. It's critical to cut as close to the line and as deeply as possible. Soak with DeBond and wait 10 to 20 minutes, repeating as needed.**

Below, **3M 4200 adhesive sealant peels off easily and cleanly after slitting the bond line and soaking for 20 minutes with DeBond Marine Formula.**

monomethyl ether (EGME), D-limonene, and glycol ethers. Nothing. I tried Goo Gone, Un-hesive, and Lift Off. Not much. I also had a deck hatch that needed resealing, but it was bound to the deck with 3M 5200 from the factory and was not coming off without pulling the skin right off the core (the bond of polyurethanes is generally stronger than the bond between the fiberglass skins and the foam or balsa core). I tried the same solvents, to no avail. Then I found three winners.

DeBond Marine Formula for Polyurethanes

My first attempt was a failure. I applied the magic juice, waited, and tried scraping. No deal. Then I got smart and called the factory. They instructed me to score neatly along the deck-side bond, first with a razor, and then with a wire. Within 30 minutes, most of that time spent doing other things while the product worked, the bond was substantially weakened. I then worked my way around with a pair of small drywall knives and the hatch came right out, with no complaint or damage. Cleanup time was also reduced, since the remaining adhesive came off with a wire brush, after a 20-minute soak with DeBond.

Re-Mov and BoatLIFE Release for Silicone

I ran a box cutter down the seam between the sealant and the aluminum frame, being careful not to gouge the anodizing, and then soaked the slit with Re-Mov Silicone & Adhesive Remover. After 15 minutes, the lens popped right out, no tools required. I repeated the same process on the remaining silicone from the inside. I then sprayed the scattered residue, worked it in with a wire brush, then brushed it all off 15 minutes later. After a quick scrub and a rinse with water (or a wipe with a wet rag) to remove debris, the hatch was ready for the replacement lens to be installed, with no tedious scrubbing or sanding, and no slippery feel.

Excited by the effectiveness, I repeated the test on gelcoat. I glued some gelcoat/fiberglass bits together with silicone, set them aside for a few months, and then separated them using Re-Mov. After a quick scrub, I bonded them with Sikaflex-291 polyurethane, allowed them to cure for a month, and then pull-tested them in shear. The silicon panels were 100% of the strength of the control panels. No more silicone residue nightmares!

BoatLIFE Release is reasonably effective on both silicone and polyurethane, but not quite as effective as the above specialty products.

A hose pick is handy for removing the last bit of sealant.

Conclusions

DeBond and Re-Mov may seem a little pricey, but the time savings are considerable, the shelf life of the products is long (at least five years), and the amount required is tiny. I've been using a pair of 4-ounce bottles for four years, and I'm writing this because I just realized I need to order more.

To recap, a few basic tips: Be sure to score carefully. Remember that you need to get the stuff right into the bond area. And give it some time to work.

Good Old Boat *Technical Editor Drew Frye draws on his training as a chemical engineer and pastimes of climbing and sailing to solve boat problems. He cruises Chesapeake Bay and the mid-Atlantic coast in his Corsair F-24 trimaran,* Fast and Furry-ous, *using its shoal draft to venture into less-explored waters. He is most recently author of* Rigging Modern Anchors *(2018, Seaworthy Publications).*

25 Years of Good Old Boat

The magazine's co-founder reflects on the early days and what boaters and farmers have in common.

BY KAREN LARSON

Like many *Good Old Boat* readers, Jerry and I have been accumulating boats for years. He often jokes that he buys boats; he doesn't sell them.

In addition to our beloved *Mystic*, the C&C 30 we've been sailing for more than 30 years and the inspiration for the magazine we founded, we also have *Sunflower*, a trailerable C&C Mega 30 that has been Jerry's project boat for at least 12 years. We still sail *Mystic* on Lake Superior, and *Sunflower* sits on her trailer next to our garage here in South Dakota sunflower country, so the name fits.

We have a collection of two-person kayaks: a Folbot you assemble from a bagful of parts, a Grabner inflatable, and our stalwart 30-year-old rotomolded plastic favorite that has traveled many miles on *Mystic*'s deck. The newest member of the collection is an aluminum

rowing, motoring, and paddling boat that can be launched into the small shallow lakes and rivers near home.

Our neighbors here in South Dakota do not understand our interest in boats and sailing. But we have more in common than they think. We are new to South Dakota, having lived here for just two years, and have much to learn about our adopted small town and the agricultural economy here. We lived in Minneapolis 25 years ago when we founded the magazine and received quizzical looks from fellow sailors of the saltwater variety. But we started with sailboat racing on one of Minnesota's 10,000-plus lakes and Lake Superior, and never believed that fresh water detracted from our sailing abilities.

When we launched *Good Old Boat* in 1998, we wanted to share stories of restoring, refitting, and upgrading sailboats. There were — and still are — boaters of every description working in boatyards and backyards to bring their very individual dreams to reality.

Through hours of backbreaking effort, their dreams emerged, and they wrote the technical pieces as well as the inspired personal love stories for other sailors like themselves. All we had to do was publish them. The stories kept coming (and still do), with more articles submitted than we could possibly print. Whether we could print it or not, we loved every article.

A few themes were repeated often. Some sailors always wanted to find the good old Tartan 28 or Ranger 33, the beloved family boat that Mom, Dad, and kids sailed back in the day. And for those fortunate enough to find the very same boat, money was not an object for a restoration driven by love and good memories.

Previous page, **these days Karen and Jerry and *Mystic*, the boat they have sailed together since 1991, haunt the docks at Barker's Island Marina in Superior, Wisconsin.**

Top right, ***Mystic* departs a sheltered cove on Lake Superior's Canadian north shore after social time rafted with Fred and Jennifer Bagley's Caliber 38, *Catamount*.** Photo by Fred Bagley.

Bottom right, **Karen and Jerry appreciate downtime aboard *Mystic*, their C&C 30, while Tom and Sandy Wells are at the helm on a sunny day in Lake Superior's Apostle Islands near Bayfield, Wisconsin.** Photo by Tom Wells.


ADVANCE
RUMELY
RUMELY
PLOWING

Another common theme was the tale of a sailor's first sight of a particular sailboat in the back lot of the boatyard. There could be mold everywhere, a tree or two growing in the cockpit, missing parts, holes, leaks, wasps, bats ... it didn't matter. The next comment was always the same: "When I first saw her, I loved her instantly."

And *there* is the parallel with the farmers who surround us here in South Dakota. They fondly recall the tractors their families used a few generations ago. They want to find Dad's old 1941 Farmall M or more often, a 1947 John Deere B — if not the exact tractor, then one very much like it. Sometimes this priceless tractor is still at the old farm place, rusted and covered by weeds behind the barn. Sometimes it has changed hands several times since it was new.

The tractor they remember fondly has been surpassed by newer, better machinery and will probably never plow another field. But once every spot of rust has been removed, the engine working like new once again, and shiny new paint applied, these tractors show up in community parades, at threshing shows, and in other farm implement shows and auctions. And the smiles on those owners' faces are just as wide as those on the faces of Good Old Boaters who have succeeded with their sailboat restorations.

Previous page, **like sailors with their good old boats, Karen and Jerry's friends, DeJae and Doug Gantvoort, are among the many South Dakota residents who remember old farm machines fondly and go to great lengths to restore them.**

Above right, **soon after sewing their own Sailrite spinnaker from a kit in 2010, Karen and Jerry took photos while sailing on Lake Superior's Canadian northern shore by Red Rock, Ontario. Jerry singlehanded the boat while Karen, paddling nearby in their kayak, shot photos.**

We understand exactly what drives these farmers to bring back to pristine condition the one special tractor they always loved best. Twenty-five years ago, we had the bug too and understood the drive to restore sailboats and to sail and love them once more. Now that we are retired, it is a delight of the highest magnitude to see *Good Old Boat* magazine continuing to appeal to sailors with dreams and the ability to make them come true.

Will we buy and restore a tractor anytime soon? There is probably a niche to be filled here with a magazine called *Good Old Tractor*. So far, we have resisted the temptation.

Good Old Boat *founders Karen Larson and Jerry Powlas retired from publishing this magazine in 2017, but they have not grown tired of sailing or of telling tales of starting "the sailing magazine for the rest of us," as the tagline put it.*

Dinghy Delight

Restoring a Dyer Dink 10 for dreamy daysailing

BY ANN HOFFNER

We hauled out our 1983 Sabre 30, *Ora Kali*, on a blustery day last November. In retrospect, we should have done it sooner. Winter comes early to the Maine coast, but I hated to see the boating season end. I had my rowboat, but oh, how I longed to be able to sail on pleasant winter mornings. I wanted a sailing dinghy.

The town we live in has lots of boaters, so my husband, Tom, and I started a search by putting a notice in the town newsletter and eyeing the racks of dinghies at the boatyard. I had my thoughts on a Dyer Midget and when a friend said there was one moldering under the deck of their house, I jumped at the offer to take it off their hands. Sadly, though it was a good little rowing dinghy and a fine replacement for the plastic rectangle WaterTender we had been using, it turned out to be an unknown model with no sailing parts and no way of finding out how to rig it.

Turning to the internet, Tom found a Dyer Dink for sale in Connecticut. A Dyer Dink? I had never heard of it. At 10 feet, it was larger than I had been thinking of, but the description sounded good: "A Philip Rhodes design, called a 'real boat' as opposed to the Dyer's line of Dhows."

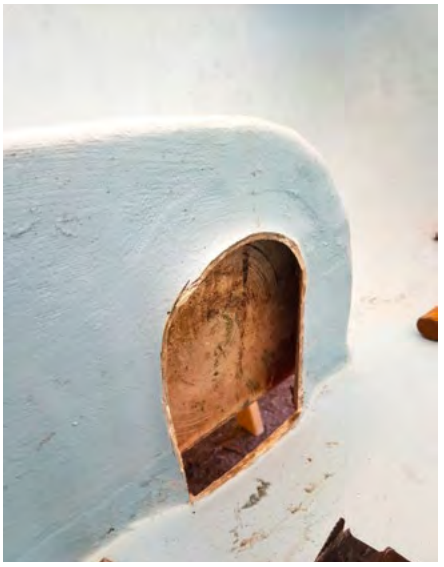
We borrowed a friend's truck and drove nine hours to Norwalk, Connecticut, on a monochromatic day in February. The dink sat right side up under a tarp in a tiny backyard. Joe had bought her with restoration dreams and apologized about switching to a powerboat better suited to his family, but the Dyer Dink thrilled me. I looked into her nicely painted swimming pool blue interior and ran my fingers lightly over her transom, where years of sun erosion around long-gone stencils had created ghost letters in the fiberglass that spelled out *Eel Wind*. We transferred her from the owner's trailer directly into the truck bed. I was afraid Joe would realize he was giving up a good deal, and since my heart was already full of dreams of my own, we didn't bother to even turn her over to examine her bottom before driving home with her tied in, feeling more like fishermen than sailors. It was kind of cool.

My dreams of jumping quickly onto the ocean were dashed once we transferred the dink upside down to sawhorses in our yard. That's when we found damage to the fiberglass around her centerboard trunk. I don't think it would have changed our minds, but there it was. Before any sea trial could commence, we had some serious work to do on our now-renamed *Chi*.

Chi's very old sail has #895 on it, a number that indicates she was probably built in the late 1950s. The first Dyer Dinks from the 1930s were wood lapstrake before Dyer switched to making "Dyeresin" boats. The complete line of dinghies — from the Midget, which cruising boats sometimes

Far left, ***Chi* had been sitting unused for a while in a backyard in Connecticut.**

Left, ***Chi* sits on sawhorses in the author's yard.**



carry, to the larger 9 and 12 ½ Dhows, to the Dink — is still available new from The Anchorage in Warren, Rhode Island. Even so, surprisingly little is available online about the dink. I did find a bunch of enthusiasts at the Riverside Dyer Dinghy Association in Riverside, Connecticut. This section of the Riverside Yacht Club frostbites Dyer Dinks ("easy to learn and difficult to master"), fields up to 40 boats at the start line between October and March, and holds championship regattas. I joined the RDDA forum. No, I can't race from Maine, but I feel connected to the group.

When the weather turned toward spring, with our big boat still in the boatyard, we flipped *Chi* right side up and determined that delamination on the underside was caused by a wooden plate fiberglassed into the centerboard trunk to accommodate the centerboard lever (the dink has a true centerboard, not a daggerboard). At first it seemed dire; the trunk fiberglass is pretty thin: Did we need a complete rebuild? But when I suggested we cut out the old wood plate and fiberglass a new one in, Tom liked the idea. Fiberglass is nasty, prickly stuff, but it accommodates odd shapes and boat corners.

After shaping a new plate, we had to be sure before fixing it in place that the centerboard would: a) still fit in the trunk and b) turn without binding at either end. Tom drilled a hole in the plate for the bronze insert that accommodates the lever. The centerboard did fit tidily into the repaired trunk, so we jiggled the plate until the holes lined up and the centerboard could move with the lever. This took a lot of frustrating finagling, and in the end, faith that our final positioning would work with the boat upright in the water. Tom then fixed the wood in place with fiberglass fabric and resin, and primed the repair so it was ready to be painted.

For a 60-plus-year-old sailing dinghy, *Chi* is in remarkable shape, partly because she is so simple. Her fiberglass hull was built to last, and aside from the centerboard trunk, needed no repair. The gelcoat shows its age with scuffs and dings and the occasional thin patch, but after Tom buffed and waxed her, she shines. A new coat of light blue paint spruced up the interior, and we chose hard green bottom paint because she will be dry-sailed off the beach. At some point a keel guard would make sense to protect the bottom from the rocky/gravelly beach at launch and retrieval.

All other hull features are made of teak. The two-part gunwale and rubrail are riveted through the top of the hull to each other. The wood has sustained injury over the years but survived well enough for us

Top left, **A hole was cut in the centerboard trunk before the new plate was set in place.**

Above, **the original reinforcement in the centerboard trunk shows damage and delamination.**

Right, **the new marine plywood reinforcing panel over multiple layers of 1708 fiberglass laid up on a temporary backer. The template for locating the centerboard shaft hole is in the background.**

Far right, **a bottom view of the centerboard opening, showing the extent of new fiberglass at the repair area.**

***Chi's* aft thwart was badly curled. After soaking in wet cloths and bags, it was clamped until it flattened out.**

to add a classic canvas bumper screwed on to protect the top and edge.

The aft thwart curled badly at the forward edge where it was not screwed down. Tom removed the teak plank, wrapped it with wet cloth and covered it in plastic to let the water soak in, then clamped the wood to a pallet for a few days to dry. When the thwart had mostly flattened, he through-bolted it to flanges formed in the original fiberglass hull.

Chi has a two-part mast and a boom all made of spruce. The mast collars are in good shape, and the wedge-shaped ends fit snugly together and are sound. The mast step is good. The lower mast section had been repaired by a previous owner, and it's unclear how sound it will be going forward, but for now, other than gluing new leather into the boom jaw, I didn't make repairs or adjustments. She is rigged with proprietary bronze Dyer parts, and her chainplates are bronze tubes that fit through sockets braced by the forward thwart and are held in place by clevis pins and cotter rings. The arrangement provides for crude but not fine length adjustments.

I bought 3/32-inch 7x19 rigging wire and tiny swages and thimbles, then borrowed a swage tool to run a new traveler as the old one had worn through. Working with the tiny rigging bits was frustrating, and I decided to put off replacing the forestay and shrouds until I had her on the water a few times and could judge whether I needed to adjust their length for stretch. I wrapped tape around a meathook in the headstay to buy time.

The sail has been patched multiple times. I like the light blue color and it's usable for the time being, but as I intend to sail through the winter, albeit in sheltered waters, I'll either make a new one or find a used sail. Even her running rigging is usable for now; though its stiffness makes it hard to handle, keeping it will give me a chance to see what I want to replace.

Much as I would have loved to rush *Chi* into the water when the basic work was done, Tom was concerned about flotation. It's common for small boats to have positive flotation for a long time, but this isn't always the case. And while *Chi* is a choice frostbiting boat because she's dry, she can turn over or, more likely, swamp. We collected chunks of blue foam off the beach that had escaped from broken-up docks, and Tom cut a piece to fit under the aft thwart and tied a couple of boat fenders to the forward thwart. It's enough until we decide how much of the interior volume to sacrifice to flotation.

Chi's rudder and centerboard and the bronze hardware are in decent shape. Since the tiller looked like it was made from nice wood, Tom stripped its white paint off for an aesthetic touch.

Finally, on a sunny September day, we strapped *Chi* to the set of wheels we use to move dinghies and canoes, and rolled her out of the front yard. We got her across the street and down the first few yards of the steep dirt drive to the beach before she settled into a rut and the boat went one way, the wheels the other. At 135 pounds, she's much heavier than my rowing dinghies. We were able to round up a neighbor to help lift her off the wheels and carry her to the water's edge.

For this first test, I only had oars. She floated without any leakage around the trunk repair, and once I pushed her off the gravel and could climb in without getting too wet, she rowed very well. I was able to raise and lower the centerboard. It was a bit stiff, but that stiffness would keep it from floating up into the trunk.

On right, ***Chi's* interior repairs have been primed prior to the finish paint job.**

Far right, ***Chi's* rudder has been checked out and repainted.**

Since that first sea trial, I have rigged *Chi's* spar and enlisted my friend Maya to sail on the bay several times. I grew up sailing small keel boats but raced centerboard dinghies in college and owned several Dyer Midgets. I enjoy the intimacy of a small boat, being so close to the water and feeling the whole boat as an extension of my muscles and skill. A friend gave us an Opti dolly, which we hacked to make it work for the longer, heavier Dink, and I leave the mast rigged because even the two-part spar is awkward for two people to step and impossible for me alone.

Launching with a fixed rudder from the beach in front of my house has proved difficult for Maya and me, and Tom is making a kickup rudder. Like other new boat manufacturers, Dyer has supply issues and can't immediately provide gudgeons for the new rudder. Until they do, Maya and I are raising the sail but not stretching the foot out on the boom, rowing to water that's deep enough to attach the rudder and crank down the centerboard before tying in the sail. One of her proprietary shroud fittings has a small crack, and this, along with other things I find as I learn more about *Chi*, will be addressed in another refit.

I attained the dreamed-of sailing dinghy for cold, crisp, early winter mornings. These days, people talk about "mindfulness." It's hard to adequately describe my feeling of complete freedom on the water. I've discovered that to successfully sail *Chi*, my body must become her extension — my hand on the tiller, my weight the animate, intelligent force that not only keeps her upright, but also helps guide her. My house faces one harbor, and with *Chi* I can sail through narrow channels between islands into the bigger harbor where *Ora Kali's* mooring is, and tack and jibe easily through the obstacle course of winter floats.

Chi has also been teaching Maya the things that a small boat knows. Maya's young. She tells me *Chi* is a bridge between herself and the ocean. "I can feel myself beginning to understand how the earth moves when I'm sailing." These are Maya's earliest words in the language of sailing, and they show a willingness to pursue fluency.

Chi also brings the two of us closer as we learn to sail her together. Maya says, "Out here on *Chi* we are both young children learning from our elder, the sea." But when she's content to sit facing forward at the middle thwart, tweaking the sail and talking about her dreams extending into the future beyond boats, leaving me to talk to *Chi*, it is pure fulfillment.

Ann Hoffner has been a sailor since she was 9 years old. For the last 20 years she's written about her adventures for a variety of sailing magazines. Along with Tom Bailey, her husband and a photographer, she downsized from their offshore passagemaking P-44, Oddly Enough, *to* Ora Kali, *a nimble, shoal-draft Sabre 30 that is teaching them the joys of Maine coastal cruising.*

Top right, **Tom and neighbor Ted ready to launch *Chi* for the first time.**

Bottom right, **the author, thrilled at sailing her new little boat.**

Motor Mischief

A longtime sailor ponders the seemingly human qualities of an obdurate outboard.

BY JOHN VIGOR

Over a long sailing life, I have found that there are times when, for no apparent reason, an outboard motor won't run. This has led me to believe that outboards can be bewitched — and not only bewitched, but spitefully malicious.

As proof, I offer my experience with a 6-hp Tohatsu long-shaft four-stroke, which I bought brand new for my aged Santana 22 after industrious and extensive research. This little Japanese motor has an excellent reputation for reliability as an auxiliary for small boats. Everybody loves the Tohatsu, apparently, and it loves them back. So I bought one. Brand new, as I said.

I put it on the back of my boat, did all the things you are supposed to do before starting it, and pulled the cord. Nothing. I pulled again. Nothing. I stopped pulling to check everything I was supposed to do before starting, and pulled again. Nothing.

My son Trent came along. "Let me have a go," he said.

One pull and it burst into life.

I bit my lip. We stopped the motor and I tried to start it. I tried and tried. Nothing. Trent tried and it started for him every time.

I wasn't angry, just puzzled (well, perhaps a little angry). I thought the agent I bought it from should know about this. I grabbed the little Tohatsu by the scruff of the neck and bundled it off to the agent. They let me watch while a young mechanic put it in a large test tank. He pulled the cord and the motor burst into life. The mechanic looked at me and raised his eyebrows.

"Want to try?" he asked.

I tried. Nothing. I tried again. I nearly pulled my arm off. Still nothing.

The chief mechanic and others crowded around to witness this debacle. Thoroughly embarrassed, I said I would try it on the boat. I threw the motor in the trunk of my car and fled.

It was obvious that the motor hated me. It was obvious that it loved my son. So I gave it to Trent. I didn't have much of an option. They are a happy couple now and I wish them well.

I have never had this sort of trouble before, not even with old outboards past their prime. My best-ever outboard was a 1975 6-hp Evinrude twin two-stroke — quiet, smooth, and powerful. Started every time. It had a great thirst for gasoline, a fault which, given its exemplary behavior otherwise, I was happy to overlook.

In view of all this, I was fascinated to learn that no less a person than Nobel Prize-winning author John Steinbeck regarded outboards as living creatures. In 1940 he took part in a biological expedition to the Gulf of California, collecting marine invertebrates. The expedition took along a skiff and an outboard. "It was intended that it (the outboard) should push us ashore and back," he says in his book *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*. "But we had not reckoned with one thing ... Life had been created."

Steinbeck referred to the outboard as a Hansen Sea-Cow, a description intended to disguise the real brand name and fend off potential legal action. "Our Hansen Sea-Cow was not only a living thing but a mean, irritable, contemptible, vengeful, mischievous, hateful living thing," he declared.

Steinbeck said members of the expedition had observed several traits in the outboard and were able to check them again and again:

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM PAYNE

- It was incredibly lazy. "The Sea-Cow loved to ride on the back of a boat, trailing its propeller daintily in the water while we rowed."
- "It had apparently some clairvoyant powers, and was able to read our minds, particularly when they were inflamed with emotion. Thus, on every occasion when we were driven to the point of destroying it, it started and ran with a great noise and excitement. This served the double purpose of saving its life and of resurrecting in our minds a false confidence in it."
- "It completely refused to run: (a) when the waves were high, (b) when the wind blew, (c) at night, early morning, and evening, (d) in rain, dew, or fog, (e) when the distance to be covered was more than 200 yards. But on warm, sunny days when the weather was calm and the white beach was close by — in a word, on days when it would have been a pleasure to row — the Sea-Cow started at a touch and would not stop."

Steinbeck concluded, "Perhaps toward the end, our observations were a little warped by emotion. Time and again as it sat on the stern with its pretty little propeller lying idly in the water, it was very close to death. And in the end, even we were infected with its malignancy and its dishonesty. We should have destroyed it, but we did not. Arriving home, we gave it a new coat of aluminum paint, spotted it at points with new red enamel, and sold it. And we might have rid the world of this mechanical cancer!"

I must admit that my experience with the little Tohatsu was not as distressing as Steinbeck's with the Sea-Cow. After all, the Tohatsu had some redeeming qualities. It loved Trent, for a start. And so far, it hasn't played that wicked outboard game whereby it starts at first pull, inspiring the maximum of confidence, and then suddenly plays dead in the most dangerous bend on the way out of the marina.

One of these days, I am going to sneak aboard Trent's boat and see if I can take the Tohatsu by surprise. Maybe it will start for me. Maybe it will have forgotten to be mean to me. You never know. It's only human, after all.

John Vigor is a retired journalist and the author of 12 books about small boats, among them Things I Wish I'd Known Before I Started Sailing, *which won the prestigious John Southam Award, and* Small Boat to Freedom. *A former editorial writer for the* San Diego Union-Tribune, *he's also the former editor of* Sea *magazine and a former copy editor of* Good Old Boat. *A national sailing dinghy champion in South Africa's International Mirror Class, he now lives in Bellingham, Washington. Find him at johnvigor.com.*

Space Saver

Rings made from sections of pipe provide an easy way to hang gear.

BY JOHN CHURCHILL

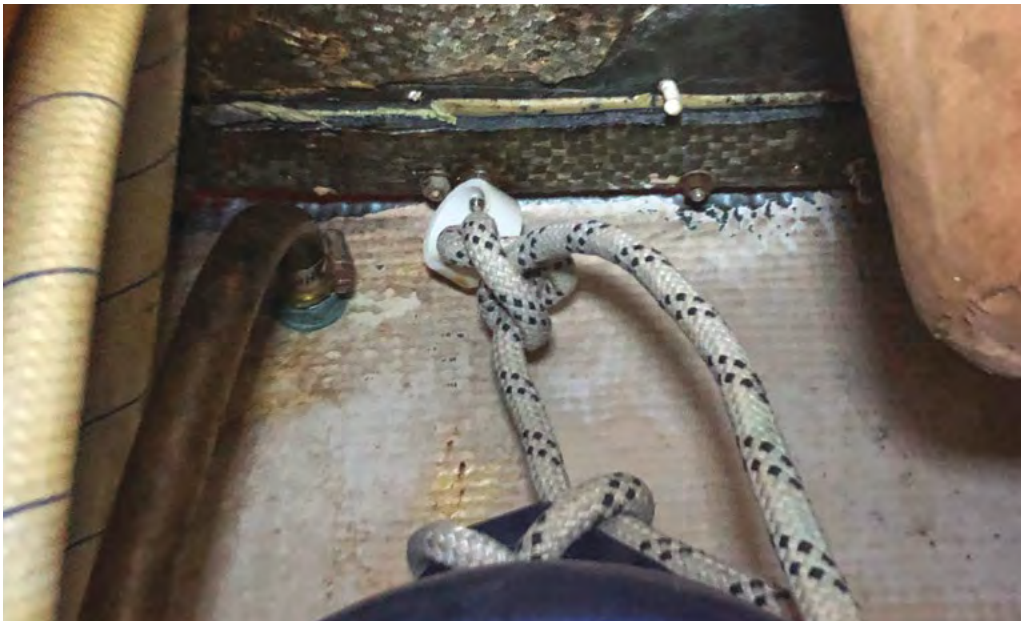
On most of our good old boats, storage in the forepeak and cockpit lockers is less than perfect. There is not quite enough room for everything. The lockers are typically triangular-shaped and gear falls to the bottom, particularly those things needed frequently or urgently.

A common solution is to hang things up. This can be done with hooks (see "Hanging Around" by Drew Frye in the May/June 2023 issue) or something similar on the bulkheads, but along the hull side, it is more challenging. Fastenings are obviously out, and the curve of the hull makes attaching a board to support hooks difficult. I have had varied success bonding things to the hull side with adhesives.

One day while installing an anchor windlass, I spent some time folded up in my forepeak. Looking around, I noticed that some of the ¼-inch stanchion and hull-to-deck fasteners were longer

Below left, **the author drilled holes into the pipe before cutting it, using a piece of wood with a 90-degree groove cut into one side to stabilize the pipe.**

Below right, **John initially used 1-inch PVC pipe to make the rings, later switching to aluminum pipe to hold heavier items.**



Above and below, **the rings are attached to overhead bolts at the deck edge and used to hang fender lines and docklines.**

than necessary, probably to ease manufacturing. This gave me an idea. Why not utilize these as a quick and easy way to hang dock lines, fenders, and other gear along the hull side?

To do that, I needed some threaded rings. I took some 1-inch PVC pipe and cut it into ½-inch lengths. I drilled and tapped these on one side and threaded them onto the end of the bolts protruding from the deck edge. After doing a couple, I realized it would be easier to drill and tap a length of pipe, then cut it into sections. But drilling the curved surface can be a slight problem. Using a drill point countersink greatly helped with starting the hole. A set of five of these bits is available on eBay for less than $10, shipped.

This gave me several inexpensive and secure rings on which to tie or hang gear. I later swapped some of the PVC rings for 1-inch aluminum Schedule 40 pipe, which is stronger for heavier items.

Now my docklines and fenders hang easily, and other things can take their place at the bottom of the locker.

John Churchill grew up a boat-crazy kid in Indiana. He built a raft at age 6, sailed Snipes as a teenager, and worked his way toward salt water and bigger boats. He has sailed a Cape Dory 26 singlehanded to Bermuda and back, and a Bristol Channel Cutter transatlantic with his father. Now in Florida, John sails Nurdle, *a Bristol 35.5 (and former repo) that he's rehabbing for extended post-retirement cruising.*

Legendary Creatures

A desert native goes cruising and takes a leap into unfamiliar territory.

BY BIANCA DUMAS

The story starts in Kanab, Utah, where we bought a sailboat. Nobody thinks of sailboats when they think of Kanab. They think of John Wayne movies. They think of tumbleweeds tumbling by, coyotes yipping in the distance, cowboys driving the old dogies home. But we had sailboats on our minds, and Kanab was where we found a good one.

My husband, Guy, is always scanning the online classifieds, and he knew I'd love this little boat if I saw her. I've always been a sucker for beauty, even if I wasn't much of a sailor. My husband and daughter were experienced trailer-sailors who had sailed in 11 lakes and bays across the country. That included the Great Salt Lake, known for the tiny tornadoes — dust devils — that spin out across the water from the desert; its oversalted, heavier-than-seawater quality; and the shallows that create large and lasting waves. Both husband and daughter had become very skilled sailors, though they'd never been on the ocean.

I had been scared off by an early sailing trip on that very lake, one that had been too much, too soon; too much wind, too much sail, too many big waves. I hadn't wanted to try sailing again for a very long

Looking out *Jackalope's* brass porthole windows in Kanab, Utah, where the boat was purchased.

time, but a few changes had taken place in my life that caused me to reconsider.

Our kids were grown and gone, and I was retired from raising and home-schooling them. I had nothing to do. I wanted Guy to be able to take the long sailing trip he'd been dreaming of. And I was ready to face the discomfort I felt when contemplating heavy weather and hard heeling. Guy could work from the road, or in this case, from the waterway, so nothing was keeping us pent up in the sagebrush but the lack of a good boat.

The boat we went to see was a Nor'Sea 27. She was a double-ended sloop with a lapstrake hull, a full keel with a cutaway forefoot, an open cockpit, and an aft cabin — a cream-colored beauty accented in brown, 27 feet long and 8 feet wide.

She was a fiberglass boat designed to look like a wooden boat. Adding to the illusion was the teakwood rubrail that protected her from bow to stern, the teak hatch up front, and a big teak bow pulpit. I'd be able to sit up there when we were underway and watch the dolphins jump below me. She was canoe-sterned, pointed on both ends. She had brass portholes that opened, six of them, and a big, fancy curl painted a shade of burnt amber on her molded rudder. Inside, her cabin was entirely paneled in cedar.

Everything about her was glowing when we first met, the consistent effect of that pure desert light. "Yes, I could live on this boat," I said.

As I said, I fall for beauty every time; I never give a thought to comfort or convenience until after the fact. This boat didn't have refrigeration or interior heating or cooling. It didn't have a stateroom. The aft cabin was the access to the diesel engine and would function as an engine room and critical storage. We would have to sleep scrunched up on the bow cushions. She had a foot pump for the kitchen sink and just enough electricity to run a few LED lights and charge our phones. Most severe of all was the powder room situation: just a portable toilet in a closet.

***Jackalope* getting ready to be trailered to the water.**

It turns out I'm not bothered by physical hardships of this kind. So I felt fine about the idea of living on this boat for a year. She was like a little westward-going wagon, my very own prairie schooner. We quickly relieved her of the name she'd been given when she had lived elsewhere. No longer would she be the anonymous *Annalisa*, but our little desert critter, *Jackalope*.

"A jackalope, what's that?" other boaters would ask. Then someone would walk by and pause. "Oh, wait, I know what that is," he would say, remembering the time his family had taken a trip to Yellowstone when he was 10. "I saw a jackalope in a gift shop once ... Are they real?"

Of course they're real. A jackalope is a jackrabbit with tiny, forked antelope-style antlers. Examples of the mature male can be seen mounted on the walls of bars throughout the intermountain west. The females, which do not produce antlers, cannot be distinguished from jackrabbits. Plains Trading Post Restaurant in Douglas, Wyoming, will sell you a hunting license for jackalope in season.

A jackalope is an admirable creature. Noble. Strong. One inherently able to take a great leap. In certain circles it's considered legendary.

That was she. That was us.

> **I, too, would have an experience of a vastness that I couldn't comprehend.**

I would never have known it, but my desert life had prepared me well for a year of sailing. Living aboard *Jackalope* was simply camping out.

We had her trailered to north Mississippi, where she was put in the water at the top of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. Then we cut out to Florida, where we were able to raise main and jib to our hearts' content. Our days were spent sitting in the open cockpit, climbing on deck to adjust sails and rigging, and navigating by channel markers and the digital charts on our phones. We sometimes sailed with dolphins, rays, manatees, or mullet.

Before sunset, we'd find a quiet cove and drop anchor, and there we'd stay for the night, floating in our liquid cul-de-sac, looking out at marsh grass or the mangroves while the sun did its spectacular work of setting. Sometimes we'd inflate the kayak and paddle to shore for a walk to the beach or the bar. I'd take some food from the ice chest — although we soon gave up on keeping ice in it — and cook a simple meal over a small alcohol stove. After dinner, I'd use that old-timey foot pump to fill the kettle with water, then wash dishes in the galley sink — washing carefully, conserving as you do in the desert.

East Coast boats have become complicated. There are boats out there with multiple staterooms, multiple kitchens, multiple wine fridges. You can

The mast is down, and the boat is ready for travel.

be air-conditioned or central-heated to your exact comfort level. If you're hooked up to the municipal water at a marina, you can shower on your boat. For an hour. Every day.

But bathing aboard *Jackalope* was like washing those dishes: You could do it if you could figure out how. And you could use a little trickle of fresh water, but you'd better use it wisely.

I'd sit in the cockpit with my swimsuit on, lather up body and hair with biodegradable soap and some sea water, and then jump overboard to rinse. But if you leave sea water on your skin, you'll feel clammy and cold, even on a hot night, because the salt on your skin will continually attract the moisture in the humid air. You've got to use some of that precious fresh water from the tank to wipe the salt from your skin and rinse your hair. It's a lot of work, and it left me jonesing for a real shower because I never really felt clean or dry.

If in the desert we had once been considered some category of hippie, that judgment was intensified as we cruised on a small sailboat that lacked electronics and conveniences. Sure, we could have paid for marinas and had access to their bathhouses, but we didn't want to spend the money required to do that; we were camping, for heaven's sake. We liked the free anchorages. We liked drinking our ambient-temperature red wine on board; it made us look forward to cold beer on shore. We liked washing an occasional shirt in a bucket and hanging it on the safety lines with clothespins. We were sun bums, sailor trash, saltwater hippies.

But when we wanted showers, we couldn't just turn on the hot water. We had to improvise.

Thus, I recalled that every beach has a public shower post near the parking lot. It's got a low nozzle for rinsing the sand off your feet before you put your shoes back on, and a high nozzle for rinsing the sand and the salt off your body. I would use the high nozzle to its full potential. Soap up, rinse, even shave my legs — in a swimsuit, of course, No need to get a ticket for indecent exposure.

On a sailboat as in the desert: You walk on the sand. You search for the water.

When friends from Florida visited us in southern Utah, I'd expected them to be as impressed with our landscape of red rock cliffs and soaring sandstone towers as I am. Instead, they greeted us cautiously. They seemed blind to the beauty of the desert — it was the size that had gotten to them. I think they were experiencing a sudden fear caused by being able to see so much uninhabited land at one time. For people who were used to living on a flat peninsula studded with trees, there was simply too much to see here. The line of sight went on for 1,000 square miles. The vastness and the variations in altitude were too much.

Then there was the sparse population; I think it made them suspicious. What kind of nuts would actually live out here, they seemed to wonder, so far from civilization?

Our Florida friends had driven across Utah on I-80, and the only town they'd seen in 100 miles was Green River, a strip of gas stations that never has looked very welcoming. They had turned south at Fremont Junction and come up over Hogan Pass (still no towns), until they dropped down into Fremont, home to only a couple hundred people and a couple hundred milk cows. After crossing the entire county to get to us, they reported in astonishment that they'd seen exactly zero stoplights and two stop signs before they turned into the RV park.

Our friend Jan, looking nervously at an immense landscape of 11,000-foot flat-topped mountains, rows of red bluffs, lumps of purple bentonite clay, and tomato-colored Moenkopi stone towers, asked warily, "Where's the grocery store?"

I knew her motorhome was stocked with at least a week's worth of food; there was something else behind her question.

"There's one about 8 miles back the way you came," I said, giving her room to say more.

"No," she said quickly, "Not like that." She must have seen our little Food Town market. "I mean a real grocery store," she said. "Like a Walmart."

And then she got to the point. "Where's the hospital?"

The hospital is 60 miles to the west, over an uninhabited stretch of high-altitude plateau and through a canyon. I knew she didn't want to go to the hospital. She wanted the hospital and the Walmart to be close by in case she needed them. She wanted to establish a handrail. She was asking, "How did one hold on in this vast place?"

Agoraphobia isn't just a fear of open spaces; it's also the fear that one will be unable to escape whatever space one is in. Maybe the desert just strikes a visitor from a flat land as something too big to escape. Those fears are rational, really. It's just that desert people get used to their unrelenting surroundings and experience them as a comfort.

At the time I thought it was a bit much, being wary of the desert. But I, too, would have an experience of a vastness that I couldn't comprehend in my year of sailing on *Jackalope*.

It was my first passage on the Gulf of Mexico. We set out from a small town in the Florida Panhandle at sunset and would spend two nights on the water. That first night, alone on watch while the captain slept, *Jackalope* riding the swells, I had an intense experience of displeasure that didn't match my surroundings. Dolphins were trailing the sailboat, jumping alongside her. The moon was out, full and slightly blurred by the humidity in the air, making the dolphins glow and the water glimmer.

***Jackalope* leaves sight of land to start her Gulf passage.**

This scene, which I'd grown to believe had been invented just for T-shirts and paintings on black velvet in Tijuana, was real, and I was seeing it with my own eyes. But mingled with the mystery and thrill of being two people alone in a tiny vessel on a vast body of water was the sobering understanding that I could not escape.

It wasn't a phobia. It was a fact.

That night on the Gulf, I had to put all my trust in *Jackalope*. I had to trust that although we thought of her as our little desert critter, she was really a native of this land of endless water. I had to trust that her lead keel would keep the bottom part down and the top part up. That her mast would stand steady and firm. That her hull would be sound against leaks. That her compass would aim true.

We did other passages that year, and each one was easier than the one before. I trusted *Jackalope* out on the water. But I was never truly comfortable. I kept my eyes peeled. I was wary. What kind of nuts, I wondered, actually glory in being all the way out here?

In the end, we parted ways. *Jackalope* wanted to stay on the ocean. I was ready to go home to the Utah desert, and my husband, who would have stayed on the water indefinitely, had work to do on land. *Jackalope* found new owners, people who also cherished her lapstrake and teak but would in all probability change her name.

We bid her goodbye on the docks and headed back to the desert. We were legendary creatures longing for that vast and barren landscape that felt like home.

Bianca Dumas was born and raised in a coal mining town in the Utah desert. Despite that geographical preference, she has traveled and adventured extensively, by land and by water, throughout the United States. She and her husband recently completed a yearlong, 6,000-mile sailboat cruising adventure on Jackalope.

On right, above, ***Jackalope*** **is on the docks at a north Mississippi marina, awaiting the start of the trip down the Tenn-Tom Waterway.**

On right, below, **all three legendary creatures are captured in a single photo, tied to a free dock for a good night's rest.**

The Big Blue

A coastal sailor jumps at the chance to cross an ocean.

BY BERT VERMEER

A lifetime of sailing the protected waters of Vancouver Island on British Columbia's west coast had given me a wealth of sailing experience — but no ocean crossing.

I had dreamed of that possibility but realized that an old 30-foot coastal cruiser was not a practical boat for such an adventure. Sure, I had sailed the west side of Vancouver Island's open ocean, and conditions there could be as treacherous as any other stretch of water in the world, but a safe anchorage was always within reach. What would it be like to really head out into the wild blue yonder? There are plenty of books to read and videos to watch, but that's not the same as being there.

Then an opportunity came up. A sailing friend announced that he was planning to participate in the 2016 Vic-Maui International Yacht Race, doublehanded, aboard his Sabre 386. Chris had crossed oceans before and had an experienced sailing buddy as crew for the race; would I be interested in helping bring *Amiskwi* back to Victoria as a third crew member? Of course I would! What an opportunity! I knew the boat well; I looked after her during the winter months and had worked on her in the past. In the yearlong preparation for the race, Chris, Rick, and I undertook some major projects to comply with the offshore racing standards. I felt comfortable with the boat, and both Chris and Rick were good buddies and competent sailors. My concern was myself. Could I live up to their expectations and the demands of ocean sailing?

Having sailed in big seas and rough water, I knew I was prone to seasickness if I wasn't driving the boat. That would prove a challenge for any long-distance trip. I secured a supply of seasickness pills from a local pharmacist, medication that I had used before and knew would work without putting me to sleep. I also purchased scopolamine transdermal patches as a worst-case backup plan. I had used them years before when instructing high-speed driver's training (watching the driver, not the road) and I knew they also worked for me when I was in continuous motion.

Race day arrived, and Chris and Rick soon drifted out of view off the Victoria waterfront. I followed their progress with the Racetracker app, providing communication support as needed. Upon arriving in Maui, I found *Amiskwi* secured, Mediterranean-style, at the tiny Lahaina harbor after a successful 17-day race. The boat was in excellent condition and required little in the way of repair, but purchasing portable containers for additional fuel for the return trip was a challenge. The fleet seemed to have cleaned out local supplies.

Anticipation was running high the day before departure, with a nervous excitement. I was worried. Would I be able to function if I got sick? Would I be a liability to my buddies? I could picture myself heaving over the side for days on end, perhaps forcing the boat back to Maui to throw me on the beach. I decided to forgo the pills and go straight to the patches, sticking one behind my ear as I climbed into bed for one last night ashore.

I woke up the next morning and crawled out of bed — only to promptly fall on my face. Oh, did I feel bad! I was nauseated and could hardly stand. Obviously, the patch was not agreeing with me this time. Oh well, nothing to do but tough

Rick Wunderlich, left, with author Bert Vermeer and skipper Chris Read in Lahaina Harbor, Maui, on departure day.

it out. I forced myself to adapt, packed up, and wandered down to the harbor, hoping the effects of the patch would dissipate with fresh air and action. I didn't want to give up just yet. I was first to *Amiskwi* and washed the accumulated sand off the deck, then realized the portlights had been left open overnight. Seems this just wasn't going to be my day.

Chris and Rick arrived with an entourage of family and friends for the big send-off. There was hardly a ripple on the water as we maneuvered out of the narrow harbor entrance. We brought in the fenders and removed the sail cover as we motored around the lee side of Maui and abruptly into the 20-knot-plus trade winds and 6-foot swells. A hot sun and warm, humid wind enveloped us as we sailed due north on a tight reach, spray flying back to the cockpit.

The sailing conditions were spectacular, the stuff I had dreamed of. But I didn't last long. Already nauseated from the patch, I was soon on the lee rail feeding the fish. Great start! The guys were rather nonplussed about it, and I saw the occasional smirk.

We divided watches into three-hour rotations, and I stood mine as required, sick or not. I gave up on the patch and went back to the pills. As the first sunset approached, it idly crossed my queasy mind that we should be looking for an anchorage soon. Ha! That wasn't going to happen. I slept in the cockpit.

By the end of day two I was back on my feet again, feeling a bit deflated but able to function. I could start enjoying the experience. And what an experience, with warm, turquoise water and blue skies, and steady wind just off the bow as we thrashed to windward under jib and reefed main. We were on a starboard tack for the next 10 days. There were spectacular golden sunsets, a glowing moon during the nights, and Orion emerging from the eastern horizon to herald the coming day. The windvane did yeoman service keeping us on course, aimed due north to avoid the large high-pressure system that dominates off the B.C./Washington state coast during the summer months.

The days started going by in a blur. The wind, the sunsets, the moon overhead, and the squalls rolling in from the east were all fabulously enjoyable for a neophyte. The trade winds subsided as we traveled north, the boat motion easing considerably. At one point it was like sailing in the protected waters of the Canadian Gulf Islands, perfect conditions as we read books, prepared meals, and enjoyed lively conversations. Dolphins came and went, and the shadows of small shearwaters fluttered across the mainsail under the full moon, as they laughed like the munchkins in *The Wizard of Oz*. Countless Pacific man-of-war covered the water for miles, their tiny white sails catching the wind with determination as we sailed through the carpeted waves. The occasional frigate bird skimmed the wavetops, keeping a respectful distance. There was no sign of any other boat on the horizon, even though we knew there were others traveling nearby, also headed back to Victoria.

Having experienced many years of shift work, I knew how long and lonely those dark

On right from top to bottom, **Rick and Chris work to resolve a furler issue.**

A glorious mid-Pacific sunset.

Rick at the helm just north of Maui, with 2,700 nautical miles to go.

Top to bottom on left, **the sailing conditions were varied and exciting.**

Even the squalls were enjoyable.

Water rises over a windward portlight as the waves grow bigger.

hours could be. I had a bag of hard candies at the binnacle and an iPad full of music at hand. While on watch in the wee hours I would stand up every three tunes and do a complete sweep of the horizon, searching for any sign of a commercial vessel. Near the end of one midnight watch, I was driving the boat down a canyon of white cliffs with a full moon overhead when I spotted a white farmhouse ahead with a white picket fence. It was getting closer, and I could see a children's swing beside the porch. I would have to tack or head down to avoid a collision!

I was ready to call the guys on deck, the standing rule being any change in direction required at least two on deck. I was moving toward the companionway when I came to my senses, realizing with a laugh that it was a hallucination caused by fatigue. I can see that house and picket fence to this day.

As we sailed north, word came that the North Pacific High between us and the B.C. coast had narrowed into an hourglass shape. Should we turn east toward the narrowing section where wind was likely to be nonexistent? Or continue north toward Alaska, staying in the wind, and sail around the top of the system? We had extra fuel aboard to cross the high, and continuing north was a much longer route. We decided to tack and head east.

Under graying skies, the wind went light and then virtually calm, the long ocean swells rolling by from the northwest. At the most economical engine speed, we powered for a day and a half, aiming for the midpoint of Vancouver Island, well north of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and our destination. We knew there would be a river of northwest wind on the far side of the Pacific High and feared being swept down the Washington coast, or even worse, the Oregon coast. Having to tack to windward to reach the mouth of the strait against the anticipated winds would be brutal.

Finally, under magnificently clear skies and a canopy of stars overhead, a breeze heralded the beginning of the northwesterlies. Each mile brought stronger winds as we sailed out of the Pacific High and into a wall of wind. Before long, we hoisted a smaller jib and double-reefed the main. Chris and Rick crawled forward on hands and knees, the bow plunging into cold, dark water in the predawn light. By mid-morning, the long, cresting rollers and 25-plus-knot winds were creating a maelstrom of sound and motion as *Amiskwi* raced for home, hard on the wind.

The jib was soon rolled up and replaced by the small storm sail hanked onto the inner forestay. What a day! What a sail! Moving mountains of deep blue water beneath a brilliant sky, whitecaps as far as the eye could see, every movement aboard carefully planned before letting go of anything. This was ocean sailing at its most thrilling. The windvane was able to maintain a steady course, the on-watch sailor making minor adjustments while unsuccessfully trying to keep dry. Foul weather gear eventually turned into personal swimming pools. Evening approached with another spectacular sunset casting golden shadows on the mountains surrounding us.

We shortened watches to two hours and, as darkness enveloped us, we entered a very small world confined to the nearest crest, the next trough. *Amiskwi* plunged onward, bullets of spray flying back into the cockpit. With my back turned to the wind and spray, I would turn for a glance to windward, watching for large commercial vessels bearing down on us. The view was intimidating. Towering snow-topped mountains seemed destined to crash into the cockpit, but always slid under the stern. The instruments showed a steady 35-plus knots, with higher gusts. I had total confidence in the boat, what Rick and Chris called "naive optimism." I knew the boat was built for these conditions and well maintained. Should a mechanical failure happen, it would be met with three competent and motivated sailors. I was having a blast.

The second day of the big wind saw the pressure start to ease as we approached the west side of Vancouver Island. Out of the haze, I watched an oceangoing freighter on a reciprocal course about 8 miles to windward. Behind the freighter was the faint outline of a mountain range. Vancouver Island! I identified Mount Ozzard at the north edge of Barkley Sound with its large white radar dome, a familiar sight from my cruising days along the shores. One more night on the water and we'd be home.

The wind evaporated completely overnight as we drifted into the entrance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the full moon shimmering on glassy water, the lights of Neah Bay to starboard. Motoring past Victoria to our home port of Sidney was a bit anticlimactic after such a raucous sail. Family and friends welcomed us into the marina with an unexpected dock party, a fitting end to our experience. Although I was glad to be home, our arrival felt a little poignant. It had been an amazing 18 days of sailing, and it was already over. The anticipation of getting home conflicted with the wish that the trip would go on and on.

Later, the inevitable question arose: Would I do another ocean crossing? In reflection, it would have to be with the right boat and crew. This crossing was an experience that would be difficult to beat.

Bert Vermeer and his wife, Carey, live in a sailor's paradise. They have been sailing the coast of British Columbia for more than 40 years. Natasha, *an Islander Bahama 30, is their fourth boat (following a Balboa 20, an O'Day 25, and another Islander Bahama 30). Bert tends to rebuild his boats from the keel up. Now, as a retired police officer, he also maintains and repairs boats for several nonresident owners.*

Below, **the heavy winds ease as *Amiskwi* approaches the coast during the last evening on the open ocean.**

Sole Revival

An unpleasant surprise necessitates the replacement of a sole and stringer.

BY TOM ALLEY

I have a long list of projects on my boat that I want to complete. But replacing the cabin sole was not on the list, nor was it something I wanted to do. Unfortunately, a slow deck leak that traversed unseen through some cabinetry and behind some panels kept one of the stringers supporting the sole in the forward compartments of our Alberg 35 damp long enough for it to rot and fail. The failure occurred when someone stepped into the shower stall and the floor dropped a couple of inches when the stringer gave way.

While replacing a stringer and cabin sole may not be technologically complex, it is a task that can intimidate for other reasons. By chronicling my adventures here, I hope I can help instill a little confidence in other owners of good old boats should they find themselves in a similar situation.

The project began with disassembling and demolishing the sole in the head. The leak had caused some wood rot in the corner of the shower pan, though most of that was not visible since the teak veneer did a good job of hiding it. The first step was to remove the trim covering the screws holding down the shower pan. Once the shower pan was removed, I could get a clearer picture of the extent of the wood rot.

Sadly, there would be no saving this floor, nor the stringer immediately under it. At first, I had hoped I could simply sister a stringer alongside the existing one, but the rot was too extensive, and the plywood sole had delaminated a significant distance into the forward cabin, so I decided to remove the floor in the forward cabin and head and replace it. While removing the sole in the head, I discovered that the aft-most two inches was still quite solid, so I left that piece in place.

There was one surprise during disassembly. The Alberg 35 has a deck-stepped mast that sits on a transverse beam spanning the doorway to the forward cabin. There are two compression posts either side of the doorway. I had assumed these extended down to the hull, but they stop at the cabin sole. Upon closer inspection, I found that these posts are attached to the bulkhead with multiple screws or bolts and that the bulkhead is used to distribute the compressive forces of the rigging to the hull. That makes sense, because it distributes the rigging loads instead of putting point loads on the hull. I assume the compression posts also act as strongbacks to prevent the bulkhead from buckling under the compressive rigging loads.

With the floor removed, I was able to fashion a new transverse stringer using a piece of hardwood from an old pallet. I also added two longitudinal stringers going forward to support the edges of what

Top to bottom on right, **the boat's original cabin sole shows damage near the upper right corner of the shower pan.**

Removing the shower pan provides a better view of the damage.

The cabin sole was severely damaged by the leak.

would become a larger access hatch to the bilge. The existing fiberglass tabbing for the original deck was left in place to serve as a guide for locating the new floor. It also served as a good tab against which I could epoxy the new flooring. Since I knew I would be unable to match the existing flooring, I removed the ¼-inch teak veneer plywood on the remaining portions of the sole in the cabin.

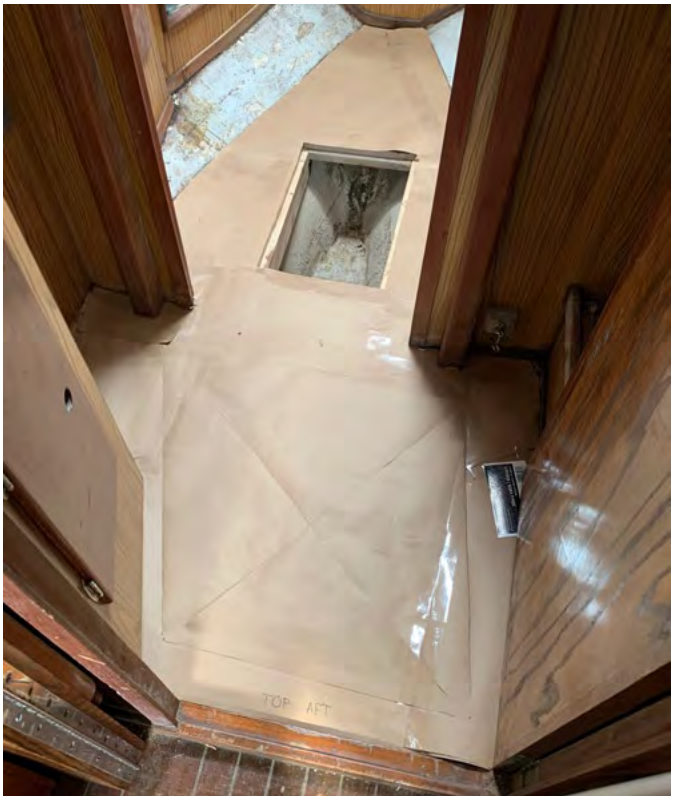
While the epoxy and fiberglass tabbing was setting up for the new stringers, I took home some cardboard templates I made to begin cutting new flooring from ¾-inch plywood. I cut everything a little bit large and then fitted the pieces using a 4½-inch grinder with 40-grit sanding discs.

Next came the painstaking process of fitting each piece into place and making sure the fit was tight. A rubber mallet ensured the pieces were nice and snug between the tabbing and the taper of the hull.

The shower pan was the next challenge. Although it had straight sides, there were no right angles on it. The easiest way to size the hole for the shower pan was to lay it upside down on the bottom of the new subfloor and trace it before installing the subfloor. I then cut the opening, but because I kept the aft end of the sole in the head, I had to make sure the opening in the new flooring aligned with it. I did that by cutting the hole small, fitting the pieces, then trimming the hole to align the shower pan to its original location.

Tom added two new longitudinal stringers to support the access hatch in the forward cabin.

The next piece of the subfloor formed the support for the forward edge of the shower sump. It was also fitted up against a small portion of the original floor that I was able to save. Again, this existing piece formed a great reference to ensure the new floor was in the same location as the old. Tabbing along the starboard side formed the other reference. I also cut and fitted a new hatch cover, and used dive weights in the forward cabin to apply pressure on the tabbing to ensure the epoxy has a good bond to the new flooring.



The template was traced onto the underlayment.

I then put the final pieces of the subfloor into place, using screws along the outside of the shower sump to support cleats that fit under the lip of the shower pan and hold it in place. The cleats, which I epoxied and screwed into position, also serve to align the new subfloor with the old. I attached the shower sump to the cleats with wood screws.

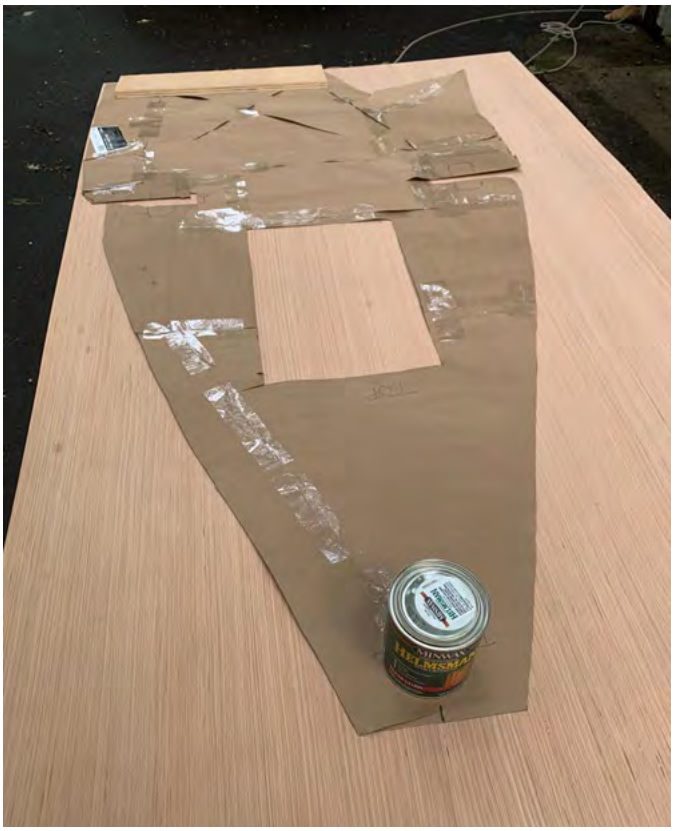
The next step involved using craft paper to make a template for the next layer of the floor. Since not all the edges of the plywood formed perfectly aligned joints, the idea was to glue down some ¼-inch underlayment to provide a smooth surface over which the flooring could be installed.

At home, I laid the template on a 4 x 8-foot piece of luan plywood for tracing.

Being optimistic (and probably naive), I thought the material might be flexible enough to curl into an inverted "U" and then pop into place. Turns out I was wrong, and I wound up having to cut the nicely traced floor — first into two pieces so it would fit through the companionway, and then into three pieces for the installation. I hadn't cut the openings into the luan at this point, wanting to first make sure that everything lined up correctly.

The forward cabin floor went in as a single piece, and I was able to hide the seam under the doorsill. Having the underlayment in two pieces in the head was helpful when I was locating the shower pan opening.

By this stage, I had cut rough openings, but as before, I made them undersized so that I could trim to an



Above on left, **Tom laid the template on a 4 x 8-foot piece of luan plywood for tracing.**

Above on right, **the author had to cut the floor into three pieces to get it into the cabin.**

exact fit against the subfloor. Once this was done, I glued the luan to the subfloor with a waterproof glue. I cut a separate piece of plywood and luan to fit the new forward bilge access hatch and glued them together in a press in my workshop.

I had considered several different scenarios for the new flooring. My original plan was to install a teak and holly sole, but the cost quickly became prohibitive, especially with monthly tuition checks going out to two different schools for my children. Next, I investigated PlasTeak and similar products. These are essentially sheets of vinyl made to look like a teak and holly sole that get glued down to the underlayment. Still, the cost to do the boat's forward two cabins using that type of product would have been over $800.

One evening I got a call from one of my crew members while she was at Lowe's. They had a box of waterproof laminate flooring in a teak pattern. The box had been damaged and was on sale

for $10 (it would normally be close to $60). Was I interested? For $10 I certainly was, as this was a very low-risk gamble. I got the box the next day and looked inside. Not only was the pattern one that I thought would work, but there was also enough flooring to do the entire space. And should I later want to refinish the floor in the main cabin, I'll be able to match the pattern in the future — though probably not for $10!

I started laying the floor from the center of the boat, working my way out so I could ensure the pattern was running longitudinally. It also allowed me to align at least one seam with the edge of the forward hatch to simplify trimming — at least a little bit. I used a utility knife to trim each piece, then once they were fitted, spread a waterproof glue out on the luan, snapped each piece into place, and pressed down. Overall, installation was quick and relatively easy, as long as I kept the utility knife sharp.

Trimming the flooring around the shower sump would prove to be more challenging because the small size of the floor surrounding it allowed for some flex. That caused a slight misalignment at the aft end of the head, but not enough to make it unmanageable. I covered the forward hatch at the same time to match the pattern of the wood.

After trimming the shower pan hole, Tom tested the look and fit of the flooring material.

After some cleaning, I replaced the grill on the shower drain. The forward access hatch has a latch to hold it in place, and the forward end is secured with two pins that fit into holes drilled into the subfloor. Eventually I will build a new cover for the shower pan, but for now, the crew is happy to be able to stay clean without having to step down into the bilge!

The new floor still looks great after a season of use, and it's nice to have a floor that's also waterproof, especially around the shower. The new floor is solid underfoot and doesn't squeak, groan, or flex when walked on.

Tom Alley and his family sail a 1965 Alberg 35 sloop, Tomfoolery, *and are active racers and cruisers with the Finger Lakes Yacht Club in Watkins Glen, New York. Tom has been a member of the United States Power Squadrons (USPS) since the late '80s and manages the Alberg 35 User Group website. When he's not sailing, thinking about sailing, or tinkering with his boat, Tom is either scuba diving, hanging out with fellow amateur radio operators (Tom's call sign is NT2S), or (as a last resort) working as an engineer to support his sailing addiction and, if there's any money left over, send his kids to college.*

Below on left and right, **a view of the finished project shows the new, larger bilge access in the forward cabin.**

False Alarm

When a PLB is accidentally activated in a remote area, the Canadian Coast Guard responds.

BY HAL WELLS

This past summer, my wife, Terri, and I set out to circumnavigate Vancouver Island on our 2006 Beneteau 423, *c'est le bon*. Starting from our winter storage location in Anacortes, Washington, we rendezvoused with our boat buddies in Sidney, British Columbia, and proceeded clockwise around Vancouver Island.

Once we progressed north of Tofino on the island's west coast, communications with the outside world were primarily restricted to VHF radio and there was virtually no cell phone coverage. With its rugged beauty, many islands, and sweeping views, this wild and largely deserted stretch of coast is definitely worth visiting. However, the limited options for communicating with the outside world, not to mention the relative lack of fellow boaters and rescue services, encouraged us to consider additional backups. We carried a Spot X on our boat, which has an SOS feature that allows communications via satellite using short text messages. *c'est le bon* also has a dedicated emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) and I have a personal locator beacon (PLB) attached to my personal floatation device that I wear when I'm outside the cockpit.

We sailed farther up the coast in early July, exploring as many of the island's inlets, sounds, and anchorages as possible. After rounding Cape Cook on the notorious Brooks Peninsula on Aug. 11, 2022, we made our way to a lovely anchorage in Klaskino Inlet, inside Scouler Pass. We anchored *c'est le bon* about 300 meters from shore, and later that evening we rowed our dinghy to the beach to join our friends and the crew of another boat for a campfire below the high-water mark. Arriving at the beach, I removed my life jacket and the clip-attached PLB, and laid it in the bow of the dinghy as I normally do. Nothing out of the ordinary. After a fun time with friends, a little shy of two hours later, we left the beach to row back to the boat.

As I reached to don my life jacket for the dinghy trip, I became aware that the PLB light was flashing. Realizing this meant that the PLB had been activated, I immediately attempted to deactivate it. Unfortunately, in the diminishing daylight, I was unable to find the power button, which is hidden beneath a protective cap attached to the antenna. Both the protective cap and antenna were still in place in their storage positions, which are designed to minimize the probability of accidentally arming the PLB and sending out a distress signal. After the short row back, we were on the boat and I was able to pull the antenna and protective cap off and deactivate the PLB by simply pushing the power button.

About three or four minutes after deactivating the PLB, while I was debating whether to call the Prince Rupert Coast Guard station on the VHF to report the accidental activation, I heard the sound of a high-power engine moving rapidly somewhere out in Klaskino Inlet — a highly unusual sound at that time of night. The sound

***c'est le bon's* PLB is an ACR Electronics model 425.**

With no cell coverage and limited VHF range, Klaskino Inlet is a remote place on Vancouver Island's northwest coast.

turned out to be a Canadian Coast Guard search and rescue Cormorant helicopter, flying low and fast. When it cleared the nearest headland I could make out its navigation lights, and it immediately turned directly toward us and hit me with the spotlight.

I knew instantly why they were there.

Quickly switching on *c'est le bon's* main VHF radio, I established communications with both the rescue helicopter and Prince Rupert Coast Guard radio to confirm that there was no distress and that the PLB had been activated accidentally somehow. The Coast Guard advised that it was canceling the emergency ("mayday fine") and standing down the helicopter, which had been sent from Comox, on the eastern side of the island. Also standing down was a Canadian warship that had also been mobilized from Quatsino Inlet, some 30 miles away by sea. The Coast Guard further advised that there would be no charge for the callout. This was good to hear.

While we were at the beach, *c'est le bon's* VHF radio was not turned on, since there was no one on the vessel. We didn't carry a handheld VHF with us to the beach, as everyone within range that we might wish to talk to was going to be on the beach with us anyway. The Spot X tracking device that we carry was also left on the boat and had been turned off for the night. Where we were anchored in Klaskino Inlet, as indeed virtually everywhere on the west coast of Vancouver Island, there is no cellular service.

The following morning, when I turned on the Spot X, I found three messages waiting from the Canadian Coast Guard. A couple of days later, when we finally got a


c'est le bon

cell phone signal, there were three more Coast Guard messages in my voicemail and text message inboxes. There was also one from my son in Houston, Texas, who was awakened at midnight by an urgent call from the Coast Guard, asking if he had heard from me.

Since I had not seen a flashing light on the PLB the entire time we were on the beach, I assumed it had been activated as we were boarding the dinghy to return to the boat, and that it had therefore only been operating for a few minutes. However, further discussions with the Coast Guard, as well as the various messages on my Spot X and cell phone, confirmed that the PLB had been activated when we arrived at the beach. Accordingly, it had been sending a distress signal out for nearly two hours by the time I discovered it was active. After the Coast Guard had exhausted all attempts to make contact with me, including contacting my son to confirm that we were indeed boating in the vicinity, they mobilized a full rescue operation at about 10 p.m. local time.

I take this event very seriously and absolutely want no part of false alarms. My wife and I talked through the steps leading up to the PLB activation and have not been able to come up with any reason to explain it. Despite our best efforts, we have been utterly unable to determine how the PLB was activated, even after multiple attempts to recreate the event. The Coast Guard duty officer advised that these types of PLBs can be activated by a sharp blow, and told me they had once found an activated PLB in the overhead storage bin of a commercial airplane that had landed a bit hard.

At the end of the summer cruising season, I discussed the event with a technician at Marine Safety Services in Seattle, Washington, and he recommended that I replace the battery in the PLB, as it had used up some significant portion of its 24-hour life during this activation. This set me back about $200.

My PLB is an ACR Electronics model PLB-425, P/N: 2922, with an (original) battery expiration date of 02/2027. I purchased it from West Marine in April 2021, just before crewing a yacht delivery from Bermuda to the Azores. The Marine Safety Services technician confirmed that the unit was in excellent condition and operating well — which we obviously found out.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Canadian Coast Guard, and specifically the crews of the Cormorant SAR aircraft and Canadian warship (number unknown) for their respective mobilizations. I was able to contact the duty officer at Comox, from where the helicopter was sent, to personally express my gratitude. Next time I'm in Comox, I owe you guys a beer.

Hal Wells and his wife, Terri, have been cruising extensively aboard their 2006 Beneteau 423 c'est le bon *for the last 10 years, completing the American Great Loop, the Down East Loop, and recently, a circumnavigation of Vancouver Island. He is a retired civil engineer and holds several U.S. Coast Guard Mariner Credentials, and is an ASA instructor for all levels in Galveston Bay, Texas, when not cruising in the Pacific Northwest.*

Opposite, ***c'est le bon*** **and buddy boat** ***Massilia*** **anchored and rafted together on their voyage around Vancouver Island.**

The Takeaway—HW

What did we learn from this unfortunate event? For starters, the good news is that the emergency alert system absolutely works. The PLB's emergency signal was picked up immediately by satellite with very accurate latitude and longitude information included, and the Canadian Coast Guard was informed. The Coast Guard very quickly tried multiple means of contacting me — VHF and cell phone — and even reached out to people at Spot to contact me via my Spot X device. After communicating with my emergency contact and confirming that we were boating in the area, the Coast Guard mobilized multiple resources to the scene within a reasonably short period of time. Count me as impressed.

A PLB located on your personal floatation device is a worthwhile safety device and should be worn by any serious boater. If you become separated from the mother boat and are unable to return to it, the PLB provides a means of contacting rescue services. I am confident that I did not abuse my PLB, but there is no doubt that it was activated somehow. I now treat it with a bit more care when donning and removing it, and any time I take a knock or stumble while wearing my life jacket, I check it immediately to make sure the light is NOT flashing.

I recommend that you follow my advice to avoid a similarly embarrassing callout for emergency services. It would also be a good idea to carry a handheld VHF radio any time you leave your boat, especially in areas where there is no cell service. Although a VHF radio may not have the transmission power to talk to the Coast Guard, it may be possible to hear alerts that the Coast Guard broadcasts.

So You Want to Sail South?

Lessons learned while sailing down the East Coast to warmer weather

BY ED ZACKO

You're ready. You have the boat of your dreams and you've spent enough time sailing your home waters to be prepared for the leap south for a winter in the sun. To be sure, it's a monumental coastal cruising journey that will certainly be a definitive time in your life. But what are the realities and logistics that go into such an endeavor?

My wife, Ellen, and I took our first trip south down the East Coast of the U.S. in 1981 on our newly launched Nor'Sea 27, *Entr'acte*. We had several years of sailing experience on Long Island Sound, but from the very beginning of our voyage we recognized a fundamental difference between vacation sailing and cruising long distances. Making a boat go and getting it to take you to a faraway destination are two entirely different things: The farther the destination, the trickier things become. The cruising guides cover almost everything. We had them and thought we understood them, but there was much we missed or misunderstood, and as a result, we paid the price.

Most of our cruising buddies from the "Class of 1981" made it to Florida, and many well beyond, but sadly, some dropped out along the way, frightened and disillusioned after an accumulation of bad experiences. Most of these missteps could have been avoided with a better understanding of what they would encounter.

I am not about to recap the guides; they do a great job. Instead, I would like to isolate some subjects, misunderstandings, and attitudes that caused the most grief and explain our solutions as our experiences grew over the years. My goal is to help you stack the cards in your favor.

It's a long trip south, but beautiful anchorages make it all worthwhile.

Getting Started

The biggest question is: What's your destination? "South" is a pretty nebulous place. From the East Coast there are three main destinations: Florida, the Bahamas, and the Caribbean. Each one presents different challenges and each requires the proper strategy. And if you're on the West Coast, you're pretty much going to be aiming for Mexico. Much can and has been written about the various routes south, and an article could be devoted to each. For this exercise, though, I'll stick to the route down the East Coast.

Most first-timers get underway too late in the season. Like playing chess, your opening move determines the game. If you are still on the Great Lakes in September, you are late. If you are one of the last boats to transit the Oswego Canal Locks before they close for the winter, you are in for some very cold and unpleasant runs. That's one mistake we did *not* make. We did however, make others.

It's best to view this voyage as a collection of smaller, more manageable trips. The experience you gain will prepare you for the next run. A reasonable plan would be: In June/July, cross the Great Lakes and head down the Hudson River or depart from the Canadian Maritimes or Maine bound for Long Island Sound. In August/September, explore the Chesapeake Bay, and in October/November, cruise the Intracoastal Waterway (ICW) to Florida. Then it's off to the Florida Keys or possibly Bahamas, or if you prefer, just sit somewhere in the sun and watch the pelicans.

Your voyage is going to take time. Until you have made this trip, it is difficult to comprehend the distances involved and the time required to move a boat at 6 knots or less. Accept this and be patient. Don't rush. Relax and enjoy the adventure. Remember, you're not driving a floating car; you are taking a boat to sea. All plans and destinations must be made according to the laws and demands of the sea, the seasons, and the weather. To fight the sea and nature is to invite misery, stress, and possibly failure.

The farther the destination, the trickier things become.

One thing you must cure is the "we gotta go" syndrome. Start late and you begin to push it in order to make up time because winter is chasing you and you have to move. The faster you move, though, the more experiences you will miss. Don't turn your dream into a daily chore, but don't dawdle. You need to strike a balance, with the goal being to have an adventure, enjoy the journey, and avoid the nightmares. A key to this is: Travel in good weather; stay put when it's bad. Fortunately, bad weather is quite predictable once you understand what to look for.

Ellen enjoying a glorious wing and wing run southbound.

Weather

Nearly every destination and decision you make should be based on weather. When we were newbies, our biggest disasters were due to misunderstanding the weather. We learned the hard way that there are two kinds of forecasts — the one we hear and the one we want to hear. Regardless of what the forecast said, we went anyway because "we gotta go!"

Of all the gear you have on board, you absolutely must have some way of receiving regular, reliable weather information. During our earlier voyages south we would have sold our souls for internet-based smartphones, tablets, and the profusion of weather apps we have today. But be careful. They are only useful when internet access is available.

There is one serious caution regarding weather apps. When you scroll across the time of day to see three-, six-, or 12-hour periods, be extremely observant and make certain that the screen has, in fact, updated. If you scroll too fast, the app might not keep up and can freeze for a few moments. If you notice the freeze, shut off the app, restart it, then make your decision.

At certain points along the coastal route south, you're bound to lose cell coverage. You need a backup. NOAA's VHF radio broadcasts will be adequate, but VHF range is limited too. Having a shortwave receiver, single sidebar radio, satellite phone, or other satellite communication device to obtain forecasts and GRIB files are all good options.

Once your weather forecasting is set, now comes two operative words: Cold Front. The guides that go into complex detail to explain them don't do justice

to what this actually means to us on our plastic boats. "A passing cold front" means a strong, very cold wind becoming northwest, shifting north, and increasing in velocity. These fronts don't appear out of nowhere. If you follow the 24-, 48-, and 72-hour weather charts, frontal passages should come as no surprise.

When traveling south on the Hudson River or sailing Long Island Sound, north winds will provide a great reach in sheltered water. That same wind on the creeks of the Chesapeake Bay is a blast, but being out in the center of the bay in a northerly tempest can be dangerous. You can certainly travel the ICW during or after a frontal passage, but do not cross North Carolina's Albemarle or Pamlico sounds in those conditions. Follow and track the cold fronts carefully, and figure them into your planning. If any forecast predicts the passage of a cold front, continue inside or stay put. If you go outside, plan short hops to arrive at the next inlet before a frontal passage occurs. If you are outside and hear that a cold front is due to pass, get inside as soon as possible. Again, resist that "we gotta go!" urge.

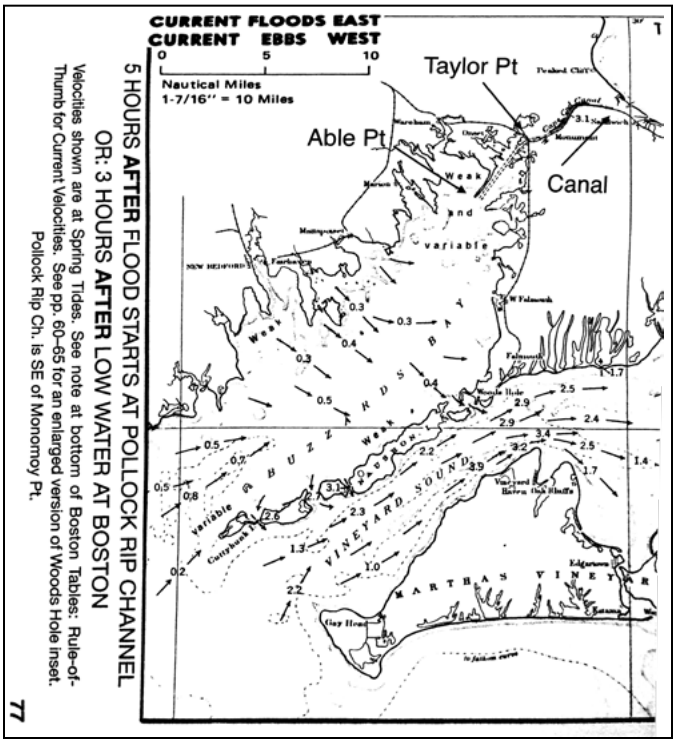
Atlantic Ocean

Now onto the actual route itself. From Maine to Buzzards Bay in Massachusetts and Long Island Sound, you are in the Atlantic Ocean in every respect. You get it all — islands, wind, calm, swell, waves, fog, rocks, ferries, you name it. Monitor the weather and plan your moves carefully. The sailing experience you gain in this area will prepare you to sail elsewhere in the world.

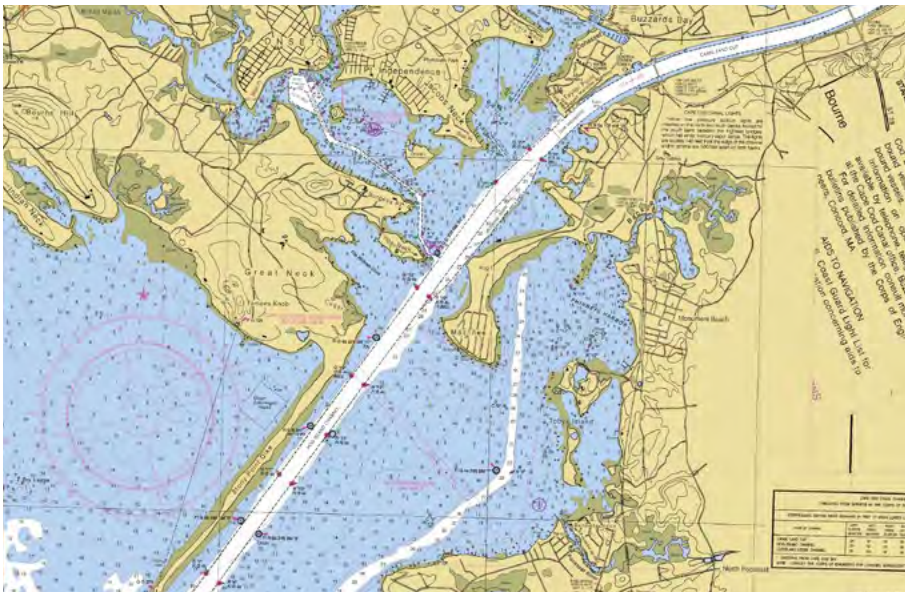
Once you are on Long Island Sound the ocean swell disappears, but remember that you are still at sea, and under certain conditions the mild sound can become nasty. If you are near Block Island, just south of mainland Rhode Island, and are lucky enough to get a solid forecast for two days of a light northeast wind, you can test your offshore ability on the 160-mile passage to Atlantic City or Cape May in New Jersey. A northeasterly wind in this area is usually a precursor to bad weather.

It can be a delightful trip, but look carefully at the prognosis and pick your entrance inlet accordingly. Cape May is a good inlet to stage for Delaware Bay. We had a delightful two-day run to Atlantic City and transit through the inlet. Then, the day we arrived, a gale began at midnight that rendered the inlet impassible for several days.

Inlets, anywhere in the world, are not to be taken lightly. They are mostly all open to the sea and because they are affected by so many factors, they are not all created equal. The cruising guides cover inlets along the East Coast in great detail. Some are safe; others are dangerous and should be avoided unless you know them well. Inlets tend to break in strong onshore winds. These breaking seas cannot be seen from seaward and you only realize the danger when it's too late to turn around. Study the guides and take their admonishments seriously.



Consult the *Eldridge Tide and Pilot Book* and plan your transit to arrive at Taylor Point at slack current before the ebb. This will minimize the effect of wind against current. Courtesy of Eldridge Tide & Pilot Book.



The Cape Cod Canal, a sea level land cut without locks, is easy to transit and well sheltered from the prevailing southwesterly winds in Buzzards Bay. Go westbound only with the current.

Cape Cod Canal

If you're coming from Maine or points east, you might have been sailing on the ocean for years and not passed through the Cape Cod Canal. From west to east it is actually pretty simple. From Cape Cod Bay going west, however, can be a bit tricky.

The Cape Cod Canal is an 8-mile sea level channel without locks, followed by a 4-mile exit channel into Buzzards Bay. Going with the current, these 8 miles are easy; it's the next four miles that can be a challenge. When the prevailing southwesterly wind blows more than 10 knots,

the water of Buzzards Bay funnels into the narrow entrance channel that runs from Able Point to Taylor Point. On the ebb, the southwesterly wind collides with the west-flowing current to generate a steep, short chop that, even with full power from your engine, can stop you cold. Those last 4 miles can be a wet, hard go until you can leave the channel.

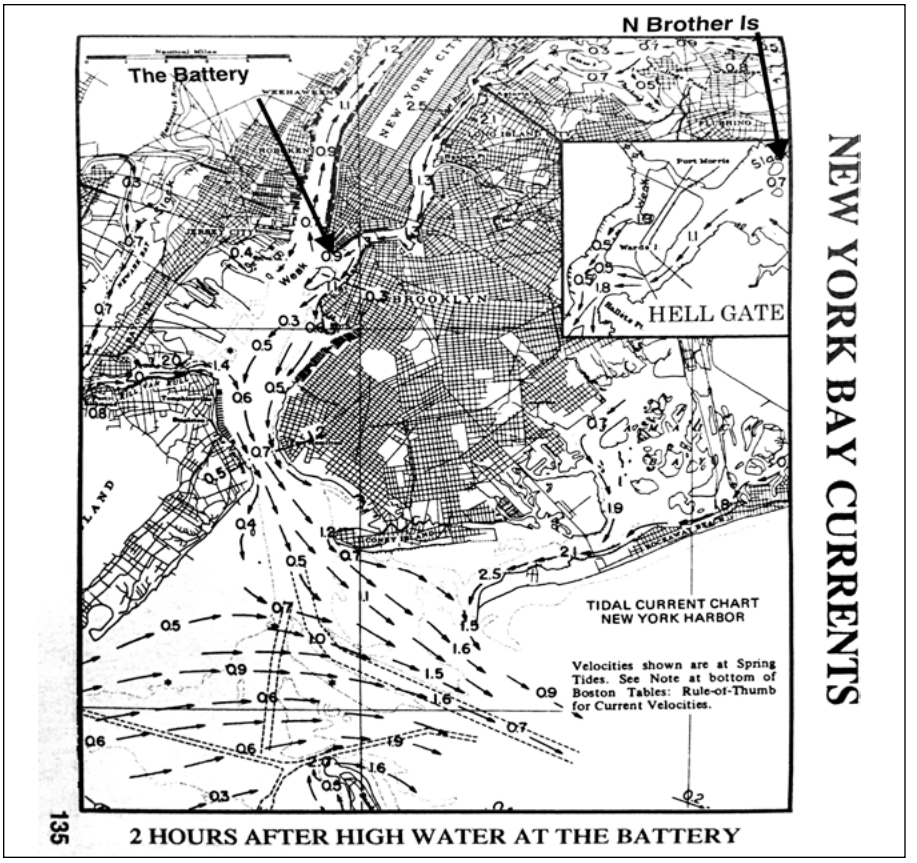
An old-timer gave us this advice: "Arrive, or wait at the canal entrance, until one hour before the slack current before the ebb at Taylor Point. While you wait, put on your foul weather gear, secure everything below, and clear your foredeck of anything that might wash overboard. You want as little current with you (opposing the wind) as possible."

This might seem ridiculous as you motor along in flat water on a sunny day, but once you turn the corner at Taylor Point, you will be thankful. Of all our westward transits of this canal, there was only one time we had a flat sea in that channel.

The Hudson River and New York Harbor

When departing the Great Lakes, the trip down the Hudson River is delightful. Pay close attention to and travel with the current. While not formidable, it will have a definite impact on your progress.

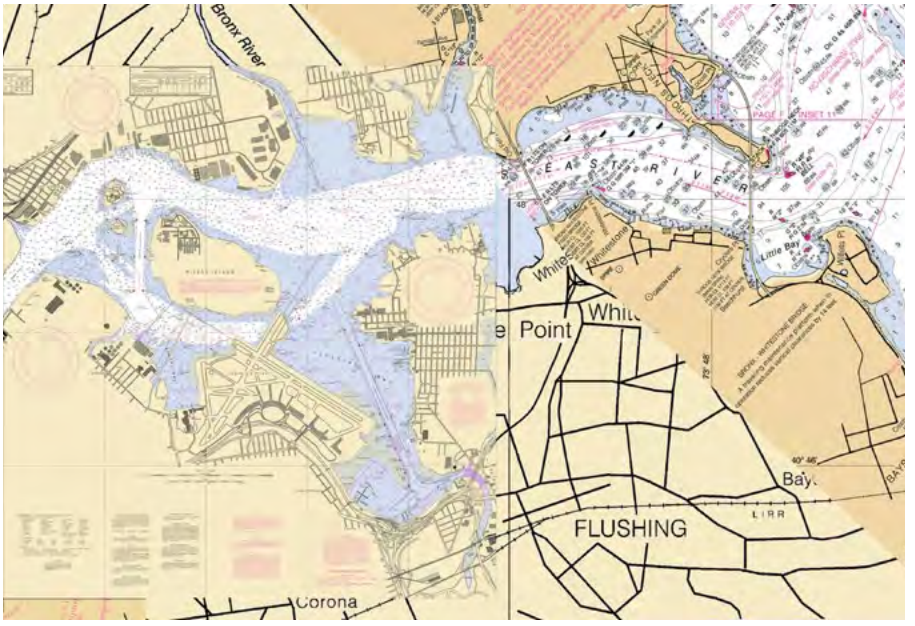
If you're coming from the east down Long Island Sound, you will ultimately have to transit the notorious Hell Gate of New York Harbor. You won't have horrific seas, but the current is formidable.



The New York Harbor current chart contains a special inset specifically for Hell Gate. Note the all-important Battery if eastbound and N Brother Island if westbound. Courtesy of Eldridge Tide & Pilot Book.

Don't go against it; you will lose. It is 4.5 miles from Throgs Neck Bridge to North Brother Island, adjacent to Hell Gate. If you can time your run to arrive at slack current before the ebb at North Brother Island, Hell Gate will be a piece of cake. Keep looking astern for commercial traffic and prepare to get out of their way.

If you arrive at the Throgs Neck Bridge and the flood current is running more than 1 knot against you, it is futile to go farther as it will only get worse. Stand off or anchor in Little Bay until the current slacks off. If it's late in the day and you must stay overnight, directly across from Little Bay is the Harlem Yacht Club, which has the best clam chowder in the universe. Once past the tip of Manhattan, cross the Hudson River, anchor behind the Statue of Liberty at Liberty State Park, and plan your next move south.



Chesapeake Bay

When sailing south from the Northeast, don't miss the Chesapeake Bay. It is unique. There are more gunkholes and creeks than you can explore in a lifetime. Creeks

If you're coming from Long Island Sound, refer to the current chart for New York Harbor and the inset specifically for Hell Gate and N Brother Island. It is 4.5 nm from Throg's Neck Bridge to N Brother. If the current is more than 1 knot against you, wait. Time your arrival at N Brother for slack current before the ebb and you will have no current problems.

tend to silt up over time, so charted depths can sometimes be inaccurate. Strong, prolonged northerly winds tend to blow the water out of the bay, resulting in a low tide that can last for days. If you run badly aground in these conditions, you might wait a long time to float off. You can sail the creeks in almost any conditions but beware of the bay itself. It can be very nasty in strong northerly winds.

To get a real feeling for the bay, I recommend two books: *Chesapeake* by James A. Michener is an extremely accurate dynastic novel that chronicles the history of the bay and those who settled it. *Beautiful Swimmers* by William W. Warner, a Pulitzer Prize winner, is specifically about the local blue crab — to understand the crab is to understand the bay.

It's easy to think that once you are south of Cape Hatteras, you can go offshore. Remember, Cape Lookout Shoals extend 20 miles offshore and Frying Pan Shoals extend 30 miles. The Gulf Stream runs right up to these shoals. If you guess wrong with the weather you will not be happy!

The Intracoastal Waterway

While the cruising guides for "The Ditch" are good, there are a few things to add. The actual entry into mile 1 of the ICW is rather obscure. As you cross Norfolk Harbor you pass through Norfolk Shipbuilding & Drydock Corporation (NORSHIPCO), which will make you think you are in the wrong place as you dodge aircraft carriers, destroyers, and tankers in various stages of construction. But carry on and stay out of the way. Mile 1 is just up ahead.

As on the Chesapeake Bay, do not trust the soundings outside the channel that are on your chart. The main channel will always have adequate depth, but as you trundle on day after day, your attention may wander, and in some areas, if you drift outside a channel marker by as much as a foot, you could find yourself hard aground. What looks like an unmarked 8-foot-deep channel to a good anchor spot may only have 5 feet or less.

Going south, the red buoys will be on your starboard side. If you concentrate on staying on the starboard (red) side of the channel and steer directly from red to red, you will certainly go aground. We were advised that it is better to steer in an elongated zigzag pattern. As you pass a red buoy, look for the next green and steer toward, but not to, it, still favoring the starboard side of the channel. As you steer toward the green, when the next red becomes prominent, steer back toward, but not to, red. Red, green, red, green. Don't overdo it and hog the channel, but the method works. Remember to always look behind you for approaching powerboats. They travel at a rather high speed and will show no mercy. AIS is a great predictor of approaching traffic.

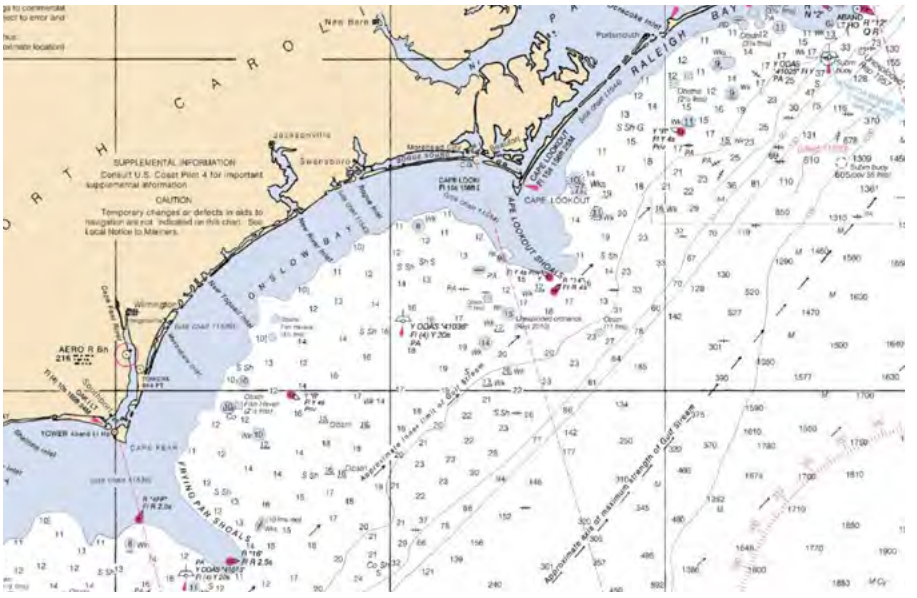
There is very little you can do about the current on the ICW. On runs between inlets, the current will be with you, then against. What you gain you lose, and vice versa. When you pass an inlet, keep track of the buoys, know if you are sliding sideways or not, and don't run onto a sandbar.

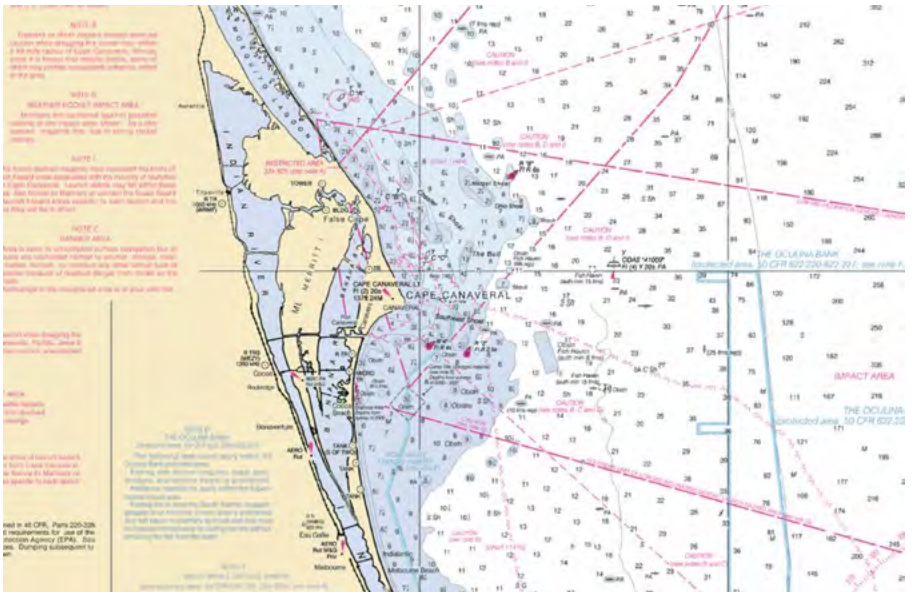
The Gulf Stream

If you are taking the outside route from the Chesapeake Bay, you're going to encounter the Gulf Stream. This river in the ocean flows north at an average speed of 3.5 knots. I have seen it as high as 6 knots. When a cold front passes and the wind blows from the north, it can result in catastrophic seas.

You might want to go offshore either to gain experience or to save time. More distance can be covered in a two-day coastal passage than you would in a week on the ICW, but be careful and pay attention to the weather. In late November we wanted to go outside from Charleston, South Carolina, and the forecast clearly said: "A cold front will pass off the Carolinas later tonight ..." We read it, left anyway, and we got pasted big time! Lesson learned.

A weak front can last from a few hours to a day or more before it blows out. Without any warning, it can also develop





On an offshore passage from St. Augustine to Ft. Pierce, Florida, we were overtaken by an approaching cold front. With the Gulf Stream immediately to our left, we were trapped and had no choice but to cross the shoal water off Cape Canaveral in 8-foot breaking seas.

into a depression, with storm-force winds that could last for a week or more and turn into a serious survival situation. The Gulf Stream comes closer to shore the farther south you go. In such conditions an inlet might not be passable, leaving you trapped outside. With the stream so close to shore, you have no sea room to run off, and if you heave to, you will drift into the stream, which will be a nightmare.

Dealing with the Capes

For decades, cruisers heading south have been under the impression that once south of the dreaded Cape Hatteras, they could go safely offshore at Morehead City, North Carolina, and skip the drudgery of "driving down the ditch." That's the theory. The reality is that many things conspire to make this potentially dangerous. Immediately outside Hatteras Inlet you run smack into the west wall of the Gulf Stream. Sixty-five miles farther south, you run into Cape Lookout and its shoals, which extend 20 miles seaward, again right up against the Gulf Stream. Eighty miles farther on are Frying Pan Shoals, which extend seaward 30 miles up against the wall of the stream. In good weather you might pull this off, but due to "Cape Effect," the weather here is notoriously unstable. If you get caught out there, you're in big trouble. On our first trip south we thought better of it, stayed inside and avoided a front that turned into a major winter storm. Farther south we were not so lucky.

In Florida, wanting to save time, we made the gigantic mistake of going outside at St. Augustine. As we approached Cape Canaveral, we found ourselves in shoal water with a front approaching. We could not get safely into deep water without running into the Gulf Stream, so we continued south with the north wind astern but just inside the stream. What we failed to understand was the effect the strong north wind would have on the shoal water off Cape Canaveral. The front passed just after midnight. As the wind howled over the shallow water, the seas built to over 8 feet and began to break regularly over the stern and over us. Within minutes we were very wet and cold. Trading places in the cockpit every 20 minutes, we watched in awe as our newly installed windvane handled the helm like someone possessed. Lesson learned once again.

You've Done It

With all the beauty, adventure, and obstacles of the southbound journey in your wake, you've become a better sailor. In the process, you have also probably learned a lot more about your boat, weather systems, tides and currents, and so much more. Now you can settle in and enjoy the warmer weather and water. Congratulations — you've made it south.

Good Old Boat *Contributing Editor Ed Zacko, a drummer, and his wife, Ellen, a violinist, met in the orchestra pit of a Broadway musical. They built their Nor'Sea 27,* Entr'acte, *from a bare hull, and since 1980 have made one transpacific and four transatlantic crossings. After spending a couple of summers in southern Spain, Ed and Ellen shipped themselves and* Entr'acte *to Phoenix, Arizona, where they have refitted her while also keeping up a busy concert schedule in the Southwest. They recently completed their latest project, a children's book,* The Adventures of Mike the Moose: The Boys Find the World.

The author and his wife, Ellen, enjoy the warmer weather down south.

A Current Affair

How to tell when you may be heading in the wrong direction.

BY CONNIE MCBRIDE

In boating, and in life, you're not always going where you're looking. Your bow may be pointed toward your destination, but circumstances may be pushing you in a different direction. In life, it's not always easy to identify when you're being shoved sideways. Luckily for us, in boating, there is a simple trick to knowing when you're not going where you're looking.

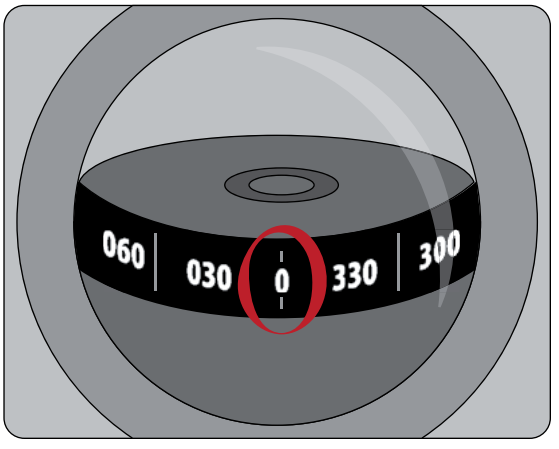
Assuming that your compass has been calibrated and there is nothing interfering with it, the numbers on the card tell you in what direction the bow of the boat is *pointing*. In a perfect world, this would also tell you in which direction the boat is *moving*. We all know boating does not happen in a vacuum, so let's consider some ways in which reality creates a discrepancy between your compass heading and which direction your boat is actually moving.

Hard on the wind, we sailors would all like to believe we are really headed in the same direction the bow is pointing, but most of us recognize that as fantasy, only happening in theory and in our dreams. The truth is we are all victims, to one extent or another, of leeway, that nasty wind-borne disease that pushes our boat downwind, no matter where the bow is pointing. In fact, the closer we sail to the wind, or the more poorly we trim the sails, the greater the leeway.

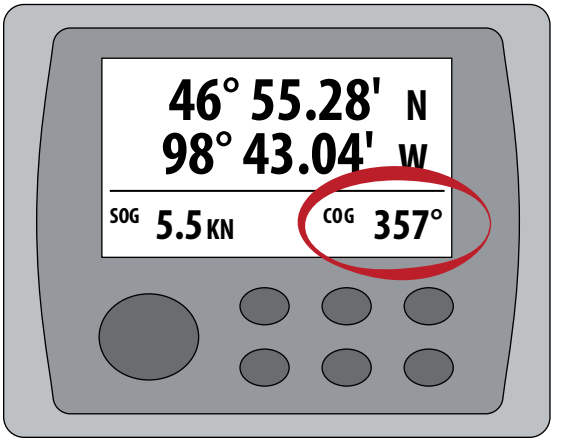
While leeway is real and measurable, where our fat-bottomed girl falls prey to being pushed around the most is when crossing an inlet at the wrong state of tide. A strong current will grab hold of our full keel and drag *Eurisko* either out the inlet or up the river opposite the inlet. We try to time our encounters with inlets on the Intracoastal Waterway to avoid max flow, but on those

The author's 1978 Creekmore 34 *Eurisko* sails the calm but sometimes current-confused waters of the ICW.

Compass Reading



GPS Reading

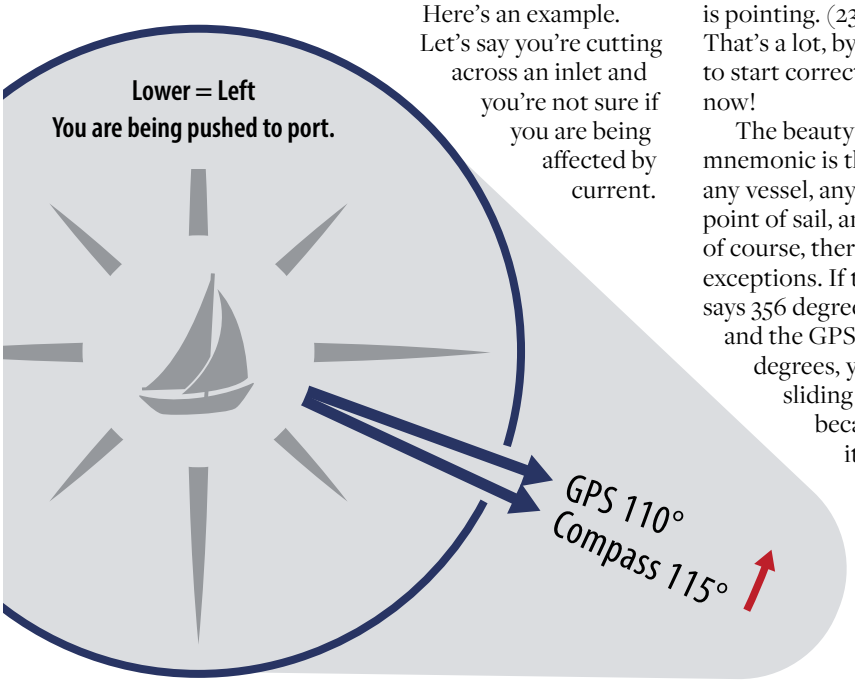


days when you cross three inlets in as many hours, it's not always possible.

So how do you know how the wind or current is affecting your heading? Enter the GPS. While a compass shows you the direction in which the boat is pointing, the "heading" setting on your GPS tells you in which direction you are moving.

First, look at the compass heading. Remember, this tells you the direction the boat is pointing. Next, look at the GPS heading. Yes, it has to be in this order. It's the only way the mnemonic works. Compare them. If the GPS is Lower, you are sliding Left. (L = L) If the GPS heading is h**I**gher, you are sliding to the r**I**ght. (I = I)

Here's an example. Let's say you're cutting across an inlet and you're not sure if you are being affected by current.



You might wonder, then, why do we need them both? That's the secret. You need both pieces of information to get an accurate picture of reality.

Because I've been a teacher in one capacity or another for three decades, mnemonics are my superpower. Over the years, I've created dozens of these little sayings and patterns to help us remember shortcuts for how to operate a boat. One example: ASAP stands for Altering Starboard, Altering Port, which refers to one whistle and two whistles. So naturally, I have a quick way to remember how to answer the captain's frantic, "Which way am I sliding?"

You look at the compass heading. It says 25 degrees. You look at the GPS. It says 24 degrees. Close enough, so no, you are not really being affected by current. Lucky you!

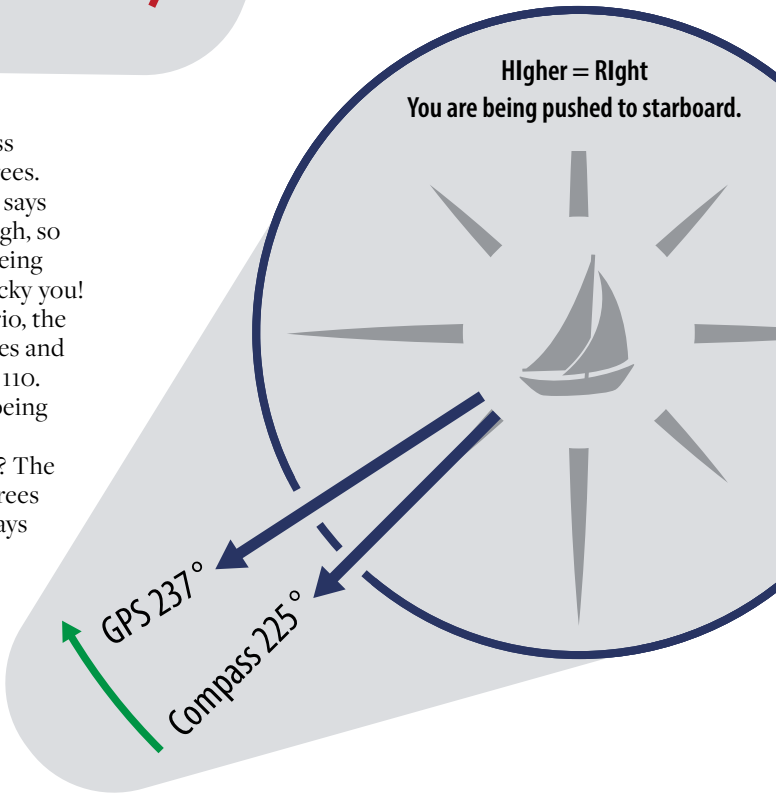
In a different scenario, the compass says 115 degrees and the GPS heading reads 110. Lower = Left. You are being pushed to port.

How about this one? The compass reads 225 degrees and the GPS heading says 237 degrees. h**I**gher = r**I**ght. You are moving to starboard of where you are pointing.

Sometimes, in the case of leeway, there is no question in which direction you are sliding, it is more a matter of how much. To solve this riddle, simply subtract the numbers. In the previous "pushed to port" scenario, you are moving 5 degrees to port of where you are pointing. (115 – 110 = 5). In the second scenario, you are actually moving 12 degrees to starboard of where the bow is pointing. (237 – 225 = 12). That's a lot, by the way! Time to start correcting for that now!

The beauty of this mnemonic is that it works for any vessel, any heading, any point of sail, any time. But of course, there are always exceptions. If the compass says 356 degrees, for example, and the GPS heading is 3 degrees, you are actually sliding to starboard because (believe it or not) 3 degrees is higher than 356. (You have to look at 3 degrees as 363 degrees in this situation.) The GPS is higher, so you are moving to the right/starboard of where the bow is pointing by 7 degrees. (363 – 356 = 7).

We use this trick when we are sailing to judge the effects of sail trim and to verify a favored tack. If we make minor changes to the sails and our slide decreases, we know we have made a good decision. If we point higher and our slide increases, we back off a bit and actually end up sailing closer to the wind when we are pointing a bit more to leeward. Because as we all know, we aren't always going where we're looking.



Connie, her husband, Dave, and their three sons sailed away from normal life in 2001. After many years in the Caribbean, they think of St. Croix as home and consider Panama one of their most exotic adventures. You can find her books, including Eurisko Sails West: A Year in Panama, *on Amazon.*

Will It Ever Be the Same?

Ruminations on sailing in years past drive home a fundamental truth.

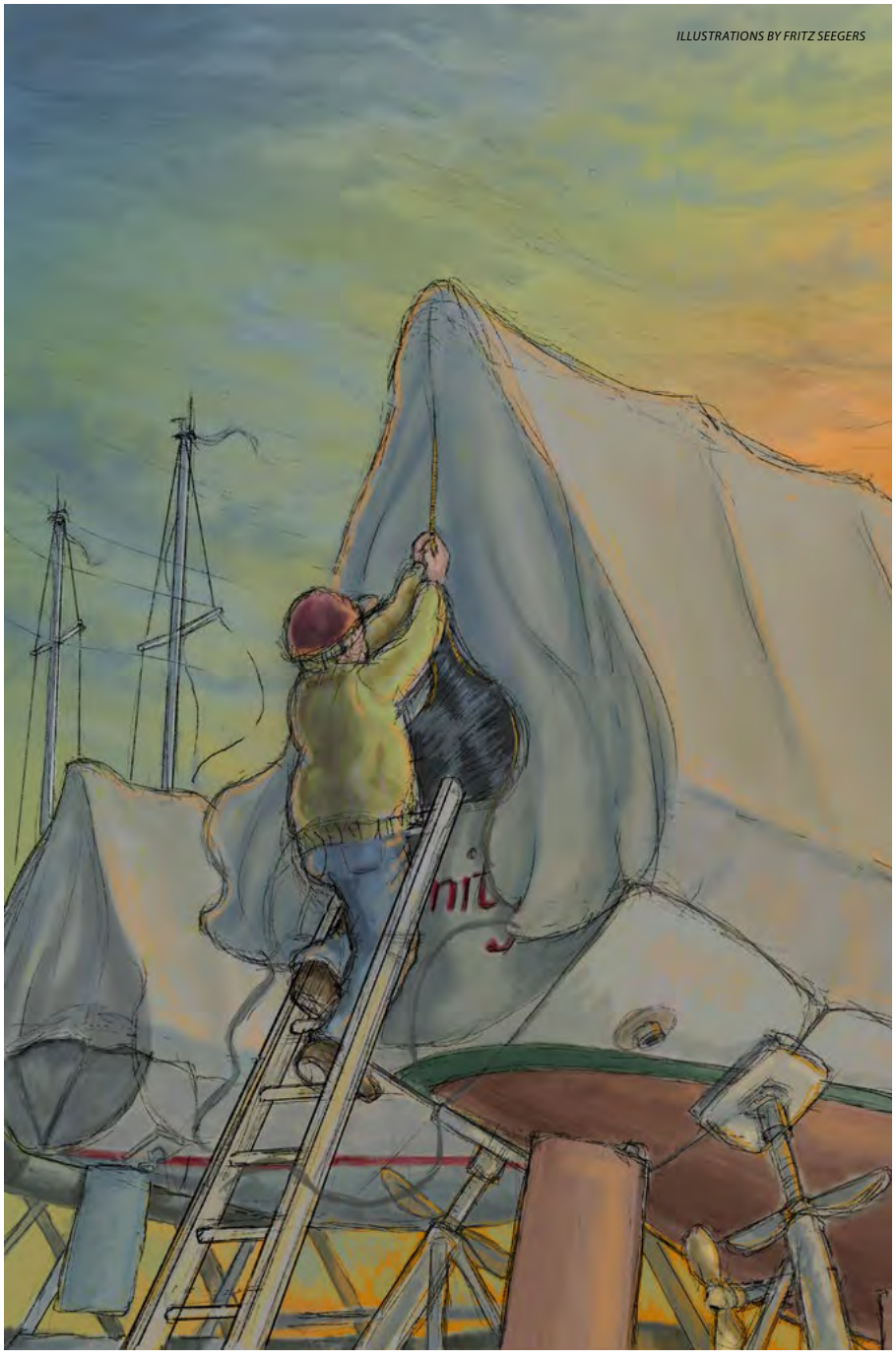
BY D.B. DAVIES

I'm climbing down the ladder from the stern of *Affinity* and pulling the tarp zipper as I descend, perhaps for the last time. She's on the hard after another sparse and difficult season, and the thought comes to me that it may be someone else who climbs this ladder in the spring and opens her up again. I shake that thought out of my head but concede that it's been a rough few years.

First it was high water, a foot or more over the docks that kept us from venturing out. Then it was Covid-19 that closed most of the yacht clubs to visitors and confined us to daysails instead of weeklong trips across and around Lake Ontario to visit old friends and make new ones. More recently it's been low water that's made getting out of the narrow gap from the harbor to the lake a challenge, and personal health issues that have kept me at the dock for most of the all-too-short sailing season. It's been a long time since the way it was, and I can't help but wonder, Will it ever be that way again?

The way it was? Then, it was a lot of elated people meeting to plan the spring launch of our boats. We were joyful and energetic, anticipating having our boats in the water. We worked together and partied together without a mask in sight. We planned cruises and races and social events that we'd share with family, friends, and visitors. A beautiful, eventful, glorious sailing season beckoned us into the warm weather, sunny skies, and blue waters.

We'd book two weeks of personal time in the middle of summer and provision the boat. Then we'd sail out a few miles toward the middle of the lake and come head to wind. The plan was simple — we'd head for the nearest port that we could get to that day, sailing on a beam reach. Then we'd trim the sails for that course, set the ever-faithful Autohelm, and relax with a snack and a beverage to enjoy the quiet pleasure of slicing silently through the



ILLUSTRATIONS BY FRITZ SEEGERS

water, heading for adventures that would no doubt unfold as they should.

A mile out from our destination, we would call in on channel 68 and announce that we were approaching and needed a slip for a day or two. No reservation was ever necessary, and we were always welcomed, usually with a member or two from the marina's club to help us tie up.

After we put the boat to bed, it was off to the clubhouse to meet friends old and new and share conversations over a beverage. Then we'd head back to the boat to prepare a meal on board or on shore. The evenings were always quiet, with brilliant stars overhead and gentle conversations about where we should go next and how long we should stay. That's not to say that sailing trips were not without their challenges. There were storms and fog and shallows and all the things every sailor has experienced, but once you got through it, it was just one more story to be exaggerated for the folks at the next club you visited.

Today that kind of spontaneity seems gone. You need to reserve slips online weeks in advance if you want to visit a reciprocal club. You use a cell phone to call ahead as you approach instead of a VHF. The clubhouses are quieter, with people nervously sitting farther apart. It just isn't the same, and you wonder if it ever will be the same again — and in your heart you know the answer. Things always change, sometimes for the better and sometimes not. But they always change.

And as you think about those past trips, you remember running out of ice between ports and worrying about food going bad and drinking warm beverages.

You remember slipping forward in foul weather gear to a treacherous foredeck in a driving rain and gusting wind to wrestle a reluctant hanked-on headsail down the forestay and struggle to jam it through a hatch or tie it to the lifeline. You remember paper charts, planning your trip, setting your course, and then having to do your own recalculating when the wind direction changed. You may even remember your panic as a dense fog set in and refused to dissipate, and you lost your bearings without coastal landmarks or a sunny horizon to guide you. That was before GPS came along to make even the most inexperienced sailor an expert navigator.

Yes, things have changed, some for the better and others for the worse. Because that is the one constant — change. And so the sailor's most valuable skill set remains the same: anticipate, accommodate, innovate, and adapt.

I close the tarp's zipper, secure the stern tiedowns, and gently pat the boat's hull. Next season, my beauty ... next season.

Don Davies is a writer with film scripts, stage plays, novels, articles, and grandchildren to his credit. He lives in Toronto with his wife, Jacqueline, and sails his good old Grampian 30, Affinity, *on Lake Ontario.*

Continued from page 6

This reminds me of a similar event some 35 years ago that didn't end well at all. A fellow member of my yacht club had his Paceship 26 hauled out and stored for the winter at a local boatyard/marina. For whatever reason, as part of the layup, he pulled his water hoses and left the seacocks open while the boat was on the stands — and then forgot he had done so. In the spring, the marina launched his boat per its schedule and placed it in a slip late in the afternoon. Then the yard workers went home. He received a call the following morning with the bad news.

— James Donovan
Weymouth, Massachusetts

Small is Bountiful

I just read "Small is Bountiful" in *Good Old Boat's* March *Dogwatch* newsletter. My theory has always been that small boats get sailed more than large boats. Maybe it's less true today when, as noted in the article, expensive boats have electrical equipment to replace muscle. (Do I really want to depend on electrical devices on the water? But that is a different subject.)

What really caught my eye were the final observations.

Jen turned to me, surprise on her face. "No! Ismitta *is our child. She is not for trade and not for sale. Ever." She paused, "Furthermore, don't talk like that in front of* Ismitta, *you'll upset her."*

Somehow, I doubt that the young couple over there on the horizon feel the same about their boat.

I am now sailing my good old boat, a 26-foot sloop, 1961 Seafarer Polaris designed by Bill Tripp Sr., for the 56th season since she launched in May. Last winter, I paid the yard maybe three times the boat's market value (OK, four times) to have a bottom job and the topsides repainted. This violated my DIY proclivities, but I'm 75 and still working full-time, 145 miles from where the boat winters. The old girl was getting a bit dowdy, even under the 40-foot rule. Some might question spending such sums on an elderly fiberglass boat. They probably aren't sailors. And they are likely the kind of people who, as Oscar Wilde quipped, know the price of everything and the value of nothing.

— Chris Campbell
Traverse City, Michigan

View from Above

We really enjoy reading *Good Old Boat*. Attached (bottom left) is an image of our Niagara 26 taken with a GoPro camera on a breezy September day several years ago on Lake Erie, off Erieau, Ontario. The Niagara 26 was reviewed in the January/February 2018 issue of *Good Old Boat*. We've owned this boat for 36 years and have a lot of fun racing and cruising on Lake Erie. Keep up the good work!

— Hugh Liebner
Erieau, Ontario

Sunrise and a Brew

I enjoyed Cliff Moore's article (May/June 2023) and took note of the superstition about sailing with a pastor. I did that some years ago, going out for a weekend with a minister and another friend. It did not provide any bad luck. After a pleasant sail on Saturday, we anchored in a quiet cove, cooked dinner, and enjoyed conversation until it was time to turn in. I awoke the next morning and while still in my bunk, I could hear some activity in the main cabin, with the icebox top being lifted and the familiar snap of a beverage can being opened. I got up and found The Rev sitting in the cockpit, enjoying a beautiful summer morning while drinking a beer. With a big smile, he said, "This is a very special treat, enjoying two of God's gifts; a sunrise and a brew. I can't do this most Sundays."

— Ken Thorn
Carrboro, North Carolina

We Want to Hear from You

We love hearing from you, our readers! To be part of Mail Buoy, share your letters and images with **andy@goodoldboat.com**. Also, are you getting The Dogwatch in your email inbox? It's free and the content is original. If you're missing it, visit goodoldboat.com to sign up.

Boats for Sale

Cape Dory 25

1985. Professionally maintained. New: head, Edson wheel steering (completely rebuilt), Schaefer furling, through-hulls. Verizon VHF, Garmin monitor, safety package (life jackets, whistles, mirrors, etc). Clearwater, FL. $8,000.

Ed O'Brien
727-785-8634

Victoria Frances 26

1982. Chuck Paine design, seldom seen on market. Lovingly maintained by owner for 36 years. 1982 1GM Yanmar with new cylinder head in 2022. Club-footed jib 80%, hank-on jib 120% almost brand new, never used by current owner! Interior varnished and spotless. Depth sounder. Bottom maintained every year by yard. Email for pictures and info. Located East Coast mid-Florida. $30,000.

Margaret Pesaturo
321-412-5943
thmargaret1@gmail.com

Pearson Wanderer 30 Sloop

1966 Pearson Wanderer 30 sloop. Bill Shaw design. Classic Pearson coastal cruiser. Roller-furling jib. Loose-footed, fully battened main. Older sails on board. New dodger. Yanmar 2GM20F diesel, 420 hours. VHF, depth, Garmin chart plotter, bulkhead compass. Brightwork, decks, and hull old, but well-maintained. Yard-maintained. Hardshell dinghy potentially included. Solid, reliable, and pretty boat from a well-respected designer and builder. Brooklin, ME. $15,000.

Peter Triandafillou
207-745-2658
trian@twc.com

Chris-Craft 35 Sail Yacht

Classic Sparkman & Stephens design. Center cockpit, fiberglass hull, built by Chris-Craft in Michigan. 38-hp Kubota diesel, 400 hours. Isotherm fridge, new head and holding tank 2022, solar panels. Great storage, ideal for cruising or liveaboard. Featured in *Good Old Boat* in May/June 2015. Interior modified for separate work areas for artist/writer owners. Located near Kilmarnock, VA. $32,500.

David Aiken
410-490-1191
studioda35@gmail.com

Hunter 260

2001. Trailer and 8-hp Honda motor included. The boat has a swing keel, fractional rig, and pedestal. Sleeps 4 and has 6 ft of headroom. It comes with the main and jib sails, bimini, boat cover, porta-potty, and lazy jacks. The sails are 3 years old and the cover for wheel and companionway are new. Carlyle Lake, Carlyle, IL $25,000.

David Renard
drenard2015@gmail.com

Grampian 30

1974 classic sloop for sale by owner. In excellent condition. A "lot of boat for the money," according to *Cruising World*. A good cruising boat, sleeps 6 with quarter berth, 6′4" headroom, two-burner propane stove, bow and stern pulpits with lifelines, twin track roller furling with genoa, refurbished main, tiller pilot self-steering, depth sounder, GPS, magnetic compass, Atomic 4 gas engine. North Channel Yacht Club in Spragge, Ontario. Includes cradle and mooring at the club. Spragge, ON. $7,500.

Aubrey Millard
647-985-1949, 705-849-3836
svveledaiv@hotmail.com

Bristol 29.9

1978 Sloop. Very good cond. LOA 29′11″, beam 10′2″, draft 4′4″. Yanmar SB12 1-cyl diesel, runs exc. Newer standing rigging, backstay tensioner. Wheel steering, GPS plotter, AIS rec, VHS w/remote mic. Newer main/dutchman, roller furler, spinnaker. Efficient galley, head, shower, etc. Lots of storage and extras. Herreshoff design; well-built and maintained cruiser. South NH. Motivated owner. $13,750 or best reasonable offer.

Jim Grenier
603-689-5129
jim@jimgrenier.com

Continued on next page

Boats for Sale

Pearson 30

1977. Owned by the boatyard owner. Beautiful condition. Custom dodger. Latest version A4 FWC. PerTronix ignition. Starts instantly. SS shaft, spurs, PSS shaft seal. Rewired and replumbed 12 years ago. Raytheon radar, Raymarine C80 plotter/color sounder, SH VHF. 5-year-old 130% genoa on Harken furler. Mainsail maintained in good condition. Water heater, battery charger, 2 group 27 deep cycle batteries. Edson steering, upgraded Moyer Marine water pump on freshwater side. New LED spreader lights, ground tackle fenders, jack stands. Edgecomb, ME. $9,500.

John Traina
207-380-6725
newcmar1@gmail.com

Products

Good Old Boat
Advertising Deadlines

ISSUE
November/December 2023
DUE ON: August 28, 2023

ISSUE
January/February 2024
DUE ON: October 30, 2023

ISSUE
March/April 2024
DUE ON: January 2, 2024

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May/June 2024
DUE ON: March 4, 2024

ISSUE
July/August 2024
DUE ON: May 6, 2024

ISSUE
September/October 2024
DUE ON: July 8, 2024

ISSUE
November/December 2024
DUE ON: September 2, 2024

Sails/Canvas

All in the Family

Amid tumultuous times, a beloved Morgan 30 is a haven for a family of six.

BY KEN VAN CAMP

Clear skies, 12- to 15-knot winds, and a following sea made for smooth sailing from our mooring ball in Northport Harbor, New York, toward our destination in Pirate's Cove, off Port Jefferson. Although the weather made for an easy 25-mile trip, conditions aboard *Focus*, our family's Morgan 30, were turbulent.

My older siblings, Claudia and Paul, were at it again, this time arguing over, what else, cigarettes. I tried to defuse the situation by moving closer to my big sister and whispering, "Paul will give you one later when Mom and Dad aren't around."

"Kenny," she laughed. "We're on a 20-foot sailboat in the middle of the ocean. When are Mom and Dad not going to be around?"

I didn't bother to correct her geometry (the boat was 30 feet long) or her geography (we were in Long Island Sound), but I accomplished my goal. She calmed down, and the arguing stopped.

I was 10 years old and it was 1969 — the year of Woodstock, the Apollo 11 moonwalk, and the biggest protests of the Vietnam War. Raising children in those times couldn't have been easy, but how impossible it must have been to deal with long-haired teenagers who talked back, smoked God knows what, and listened to rock 'n' roll.

This would be the last sail for three years when the six of us — my parents, three siblings, and me — would be together. Soon, Claudia would move in with her boyfriend, and Paul would run away from home, leaving just my 12-year-old brother, Dave, and me living with my parents.

Our shrunken family continued to take most of our vacations on *Focus*. We cruised to the east end and anchored off Shelter Island or Sag Harbor. But the ports we liked best were on the other side of the Sound — the Connecticut River, Mystic, and Fishers Island. Sometimes it was just us; other times, we joined fellow Centerport Yacht Club boats.

My favorite destination was Hamburg Cove, a peaceful estuary off the Connecticut River. As soon as the anchor dropped, we put on bathing suits and cannonballed into the cool, clear water, splashing the grown-ups until they yelled at us and told us to get lost. We didn't need prompting.

The Morgan 30 was an excellent choice for a young family on a budget. Charley Morgan, legendary sailboat racer and designer who passed away in January 2023, had a knack for creating privacy and comfort in a small space. *Focus* could sleep six and had ample storage. The galley had a deep ice chest and a gimbaled two-burner alcohol stove that allowed my mother to cook multicourse meals.

On weekends, the yacht club held races. While not the fastest boat in the fleet, *Focus* held her own. Dad took races seriously and admonished his deckhands to change canvas and tack quickly. After rigging a spinnaker, we often passed larger boats on downwind legs.

In the summer of 1972, Claudia was home from college, and Paul moved back in after his rebel streak had abated. One weekend, the six of us climbed on board *Focus* to sail the 15-mile trip to Oyster Bay. I was nervous about the first family overnighter in three years and fretted as we cast off the mooring.

Claudia sunbathed on the forward deck while *Focus* finessed the wind, and that night I slept under the stars with my siblings. It was a quiet night with a light breeze, and the next morning we were up early when my mother made coffee, scrambled eggs, and "boat toast." We all squeezed around the dinette and the conversation flowed smoothly, effortlessly, like the Morgan 30 slicing through the bay on a clear, crisp morning. It was everything I had remembered and longed for.

Ken Van Camp has been sailing along the Eastern Seaboard of the United States since before he could walk. His sailboats have plied the waters of Long Island Sound, the Chesapeake Bay, Tampa Bay, and several lakes in Pennsylvania and north-central Florida. He is married with two children, and can be reached at https://vancamp.info